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EETS 74











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R<sup>s</sup> p.

yo pat mei amende yid it done  
not. for oaput poule oap. he is  
not donly wey. Sep pat doye  
puel yngis. but also he pat  
consenty to ye doye. for sope  
alle yo consent. pat done not  
he. poure to amende oche de  
fawis. And yfere no man may  
putt an op grounde bysidis pat  
pat is put. ye whiche is cste  
ihu. Capitulum. iij.

Epelesse of o yngis. i.  
yay you heye. pat ye  
gheue you not. all yoy  
I for;ete not lytly ye matiaall  
owge de wy his puptenances.  
and pat. I desye heythi pat it wey  
tuynd ayeu. in to his kyndes  
place. wher god hym oust had  
putt it. for whan tist was i ye  
hondis of his ennyes. wher co

MS LAMBETH 551: LEAF. 16; ABT 1450 A.D.

WYCLIF'S TRACT AGAINST THE CLERGY'S HOLDING PROPERTY.

E.E. TEXT SOCIETY.

**The English Works**  
of  
**Wyclif**

**Hitherto Unprinted.**

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EDITED BY

**F. D. MATTHEW.**

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## LIST OF MANUSCRIPTS.

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Most of the MSS. from which this volume is taken have been used by Mr. Arnold for his *Select English Works of Wyclif*, and I have thought it best to keep to the distinguishing letters assigned by him in his lists (I. xvii. and III. xiii.).

### A. Bodleian, 788.

I have not seen this MS., which Mr. Arnold describes as "a small thick folio . . . on good but thin parchment, sparingly ornamented with blue and red flourishes and head-letters." He assigns it to the last decade of the fourteenth century. He has printed, I believe, all its contents except the one short tract which it has furnished to this volume, No. XXV.

### Q. New College, Oxford, 95.

This MS. consists of 148 leaves of vellum,  $4\frac{1}{2} \times 7$ , written in a hand of the fifteenth century. It has a subscription, "Johannes Wy—," and contains only sermons and tracts by Wyclif. All except that here given (No. XXIV.) were printed by Mr. Arnold.

### X. Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, 290.

A small folio on vellum of the fourteenth or early fifteenth century. It is well and clearly written, but by a careless scribe, who evidently thought little of the meaning of the words he copied. The text of tracts I. to XX. is founded on this MS.

### AA. Trinity College, Dublin, C. III. 12.

A MS. on vellum, about  $8 \times 6$ , 219 leaves. It seems to be a copy from the same original as X., but is imperfect. The handwriting is irregular; sometimes formal, and at others straggling, as if the writer were hurried or weary. In contrast to X. the copyist seems to have been interested in his work, and I suspect him of occasionally strengthening expressions to relieve his own mind. (See, for example, the various readings in the tract on Curates, from chap. xv. onwards, p. 132.) From leaf 188 a new handwriting begins, and it is probable that the two halves of the volume owe their connexion only to a similarity of subject and the favour of the printer. (See Shirley's Catalogue, xii.) It is from the second half that the tract on Dominion (our No. XXI.) is taken.

**CC.** Trinity College, Dublin, C. V. 6.

A MS. on vellum, about  $6\frac{1}{2} \times 4\frac{1}{2}$  inches, in a neat handwriting of the first part of the fifteenth century. It contains some tracts which are not Wyclif's, but has also several which are certainly his. Some of these are in Mr. Arnold's third volume, and it has furnished us with our Nos. XXII., XXIII.

**LL.** Lambeth, 551.

A MS. on vellum of 59 leaves,  $5\frac{2}{3} \times 4$  inches, written without ornament, but clearly and carefully. Dr. Todd classed it in his catalogue of the Lambeth Library as of the fourteenth century, but the best opinions I could obtain assign it to the middle of the fifteenth. The facsimile which serves as frontispiece will give judges an opportunity of deciding for themselves.

On the fly-leaf is written: "I take this to bee on of the scoles of Raynolde pecocke who wrote in K Henry the 6 tyme abute an° 1457." Below is: "Jon wicklyfe was in the beginning of Richard ye seconds tyme an° 1377;" and below this again, in the hand of Dr. James, is: "this booke is Wickelyfes and is called *De questionibus variis contra clerum.*" The volume contains nothing beyond the tract printed here, No. XXVI.

**MM.** Ashburnham XXVII.

A MS. on vellum, about  $6\frac{1}{2} \times 4\frac{1}{2}$ , written legibly, but without any attempt at adornment, in a charter hand of the fifteenth century. The copyist has gone through his work and corrected it. The MS. contains only three English tracts, one of which, our No. XXIII., is also in CC. The other two (our Nos. XXVII., XXVIII.) are printed from this, the only known copy of them. The rest of the volume is occupied with Latin works, from which I have given some quotations in the Notes.

**SS.** Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge, A, 4, 12.

I have used this MS. only for the collation of Tract No. XX., and unfortunately failed to notice that it had been entered in Mr. Arnold's list as N. He describes it in his Introduction to the first volume, pp. xiv. and xx.

Besides these MSS., which have furnished my text, I have been favoured with the use of the great MS. belonging to Trinity College, Cambridge, B. 16, 2, which, besides the philosophical treatise *de Ente*, contains the *Opus Evangelicum*, and a complete set of the Latin sermons. A few (28) of these, part of the 40 sermons "*compositi dum stetit in scholis*," are in the Lambeth MS. 23. The only other MS. of Wyclif's works which I have been able to reach is the *De Mandatis Divinis* in the University Library at Cambridge (Ll. 5. 13), and I have read only a few chapters of this.

## INTRODUCTION.

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THE date and place of Wyclif's birth are alike uncertain. Of the date all we know is that he died in 1384, and that he was then an old man, since two years before he speaks of himself as "in fine vitæ."<sup>1</sup> We may place it somewhere about 1320. As to the place, the only information we have is from Leland, who, writing two centuries after the event, tells us that he was born at Spreswell,<sup>2</sup> and elsewhere says that he sprang from the village of Wycliffe-on-Tees.<sup>3</sup> No such village as Spreswell exists,<sup>4</sup> and we may content ourselves with supposing that he belonged to the family which held the manor of Wycliffe, and that his birthplace was not very far away from the parent house.

We have no record of his early life, and can only guess that in the fourth decade of the century he went to Oxford, where

<sup>1</sup> See *Fasciculi Zizaniorum*, p. xii.

<sup>2</sup> They say that John Wiclif hæreticus was born at Spreswell, a poore village, a good myle from Richemont.—*Itinerarium*, v. 99.

<sup>3</sup> Unde Wigclif hæreticus originem duxit.—*Collectanea*, ii. 329.

<sup>4</sup> Two different attempts have been made to account for Spreswell. Whitaker suggested that the village meant was Hipewell, and this is made more probable by Mr. Walbran's discovery that in an old MS. of extracts from Leland the name is given as Ipreswell (*Harleian* 842, lf. 76). Dr. Vaughan on the other hand gives an explanation which would be most satisfactory if we could accept it. In a letter to the *Athenæum* of April 20, 1861, he writes, "Spreswell, or Speswell, stood close to the river Tees, half a mile from Wycliffe, and on the same side of the river." His authority for this statement is "John Chapman, a gentleman of respectable position in Gainsford," whose great-grandfather was the last person married in a chapel which stood there till, soon after his marriage, it fell down. To the objection that this Spreswell would be at least ten miles from Richmond, Dr. Vaughan replies that there is a spot about three miles below Wycliffe marked in the local maps as Old Richmond. The existence of a Richmond older than that which takes its name from the Castle founded by Alan of Brittany is impossible, and the name is probably an antiquary's guess as to the ruined village of Barford. It makes its first appearance, as far as I can discover, on a map of 1770. No trace of this Spreswell, which is not "within a good mile of Richmond," can be found to support Mr. Chapman's statement. I have gone into detail on this point, because Dr. Lechler has, very naturally, treated Dr. Vaughan's statement as conclusive.

doubtless he followed with assiduity and success the regular course of study. What this was we may learn from the laws published by Mr. Anstey. Four years were passed in verbal studies—grammar, rhetoric, and logic—before the student could determine and be admitted a bachelor; three full years must be given to science—arithmetic, music, geometry, and astronomy—before inception as a Master.<sup>1</sup> These seven years' labours won but the Leah of an Arts degree; he who would attain to the Rachel of theology had to pass through another and longer service. Seven years were needed before, as a Bachelor of Theology, he could lecture on the Sentences; and, lastly, he must study the Bible "biblice" for three years and lecture on one of the Canonical books before he could come forth in his full glory as a Master or Doctor of Theology.<sup>2</sup> Thus the full course required at least seventeen years, and might be delayed indefinitely by absence from the University.

The special bent of Wyclif's studies we have to divine from hints scattered through his works. These show that he had devoted some time to the acquisition of such physical science as was to be gained in the Oxford of that day, where Grossetete's name was held in honour, and where men were probably still living who had known Roger Bacon. "It is well worth notice," says Dr. Lechler, "how often and with what predilection Wyclif refers to this domain of knowledge. At one time it is arithmetic or geometry which furnishes him with illustrations of some truth or relation; at another he uses physical or chemical laws, facts of optics or acoustics, to explain moral or religious truths."<sup>3</sup> Wyclif tells us expressly that he had studied optics in his youth.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Munimenta Academica* (Rolls Series), pp. 410, 416. The list of books to be read for the Master's degree is given on p. 414. This double course of studies, the Trivium and Quadrivium, is summed up in the line "Lingua, tropus, ratio; numerus, tonus, angulus, astra."

<sup>2</sup> *Id.* pp. 389, 391.

<sup>3</sup> Lechler, Johann von Wiclif, i. 280.

<sup>4</sup> Quando fui junior et in delectacione vaga magis sollicitus, collegi diffuse proprietates lucis ex codicibus perspective et alias veritates mathematicas, quas secundum considerationem ad finem moralem concepimus in Scriptura intelligi.—Sermons, ii. 53, MS. Trin. Coll. Cambridge, 226b. In the same sermon he notices the experiment of making a coin visible by covering it with water to show refraction.

In another direction Lewis claims for him a knowledge of Civil and Canon Law and of our own municipal laws.<sup>1</sup> Some acquaintance with the Canon Law was needful to a theologian, and was not wanting to Wyclif; but it would be hard to show that he had made a special study of Civil Law, or that he knew more of the Common Law of England than might be expected from the active part which he took in University life and in State affairs.

One would like to know who were his teachers, but, in spite of numerous quotations, his writings give us no hint of personal relations with the men from whom he learned most. He probably took his doctrine of Predestination from Bradwardine, and his theory of Dominion from Fitzralph, Archbishop of Armagh; while he may have caught from William of Ockham, the bold defender of the Empire against the Pope, his strong belief that it is the duty of priests to live in poverty. Any or all of these he may have known, and he must almost certainly have been brought into contact with Fitzralph. I do not know whom we are to look to as his master in philosophy. Dr. Lorimer, relying on Wood's statement that the Northerners held with Scotus and the Southerners with Ockham, suggests that his birthplace determined his philosophical opinions and made him a Realist.<sup>2</sup>

Happily we may now cease from speculating on what may have been, as we arrive at the first certain fact recorded concerning Wyclif, that in 1360 he was Master of Balliol College.<sup>3</sup> The next year the College presented him to the living of Fillingham, in Lincolnshire, and shortly afterwards he resigned his mastership.<sup>4</sup> His acceptance of this cure does not seem to have kept him long away from Oxford. He had already written most if not all of the logical and metaphysical treatises which won for him the reputation, recorded by an unfriendly chronicler, that "he was second to none in philosophy, and without peer in the

<sup>1</sup> Lewis, p. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Lechler, English Translation, i. 150. (Additional note by translator.)

<sup>3</sup> On May 18th, 1361, Wyclif was summoned in the Court of Common Pleas as Master of le Bailliohalle.—Hist. Man. Commission, Report, iv. p. 448. It seems as if Balliol were the family college of the Wyclifs. See Fasc. Ziz. xi. note 1.

<sup>4</sup> On February 3rd, 1362, Stephen de Cornwall was Master.—H.M.C. iv. 450.

learning of the schools,"<sup>1</sup> whilst his energy and practical sagacity had made him a man of mark and influence in the University. In 1365 he was appointed Warden of Canterbury Hall. This college, which has since been absorbed in Christchurch, had been founded two years before by Simon Islip, Archbishop of Canterbury. The foundation was originally for eleven scholars, eight seculars and three monks, under a warden who was to be a monk chosen by the Archbishop from three presentees of Christchurch Convent.<sup>2</sup> This mixed constitution worked ill, and in 1365 the Archbishop removed the monks and made the college entirely secular, under Wyclif as its new warden. The chapter-convent resented this infringement of its rights, and when, after Islip's death, a monk, Simon Langham, was appointed Archbishop, little time was lost in replacing the monks and the original warden. Wyclif appealed to the Pope, but the influence of Archbishop and Convent was powerful, and the decision, after three years' litigation, was against him.<sup>3</sup>

There are always persons who can believe in no motive that is not selfish, and there were enemies of Wyclif who imputed his reforming zeal to his disappointment in this affair. Such charges may sometimes be useful as giving the measure of those who bring them. We may well believe, however, that Wyclif's experience during this lawsuit may have brought home to him the corruptions of the Court of Avignon, and may have led him to use sharper language than he had hitherto employed concerning ecclesiastical abuses.

The office of Warden of Canterbury cannot for its own sake have been of great importance. Its income, which we cannot suppose to have been great, can have had little attraction for one whose habits were ascetic,<sup>4</sup> and whose worst enemies never

<sup>1</sup> Knighton, 2644.

<sup>2</sup> It will be remembered that Canterbury was a monastic cathedral, and the chapter consisted of the Christchurch monks.

<sup>3</sup> There has been much dispute as to whether the John Wyclif of Canterbury Hall were the reformer or his contemporary namesake, who was vicar of Mayfield. I do not think we can resist the direct evidence of Woodford (quoted F. Z. 517) and the *Chronicon Angliæ* (p. 115), strengthened as they are by the passage from the *De Ecclesia* cited by Dr. Lechler (ii. 674).

<sup>4</sup> *Fasc. Zix. xlii.*



ventured to accuse him of greed. Nor did he need the honour which such a position might give, for his fame had spread beyond Oxford, and at the time when Langham deprived him of his mastership he was high in the King's favour and held some office, probably a royal chaplaincy, at the court.<sup>1</sup> This appears from a paper printed by Lewis,<sup>2</sup> which forms one step in a controversy between Wyclif and some unknown monk on the right of kings to exact fines and forfeitures from delinquent priests. The monk tried to cut the ground from under Wyclif's feet by asserting that the King had lost his right to rule in England, since he had failed to pay the Pope the annual rent of 700 marks by which the realm was held according to the terms of John's submission. To this, as a clinching argument, he demanded a direct answer. Wyclif knew, or at least suspected, that his opponent was trying to entrap him into utterances which could be used to his disadvantage. He declares himself surprised that his opponent should press him to answer an argument which does not concern him more than any other speculative theologian or legist. "But," he says, "three reasons have been given me why he acts thus: first, that I may be ill-spoken of at the Roman Court, and be deprived by heavy censures of ecclesiastical benefices. Secondly, that hence the favour of the Roman Court may be reflected upon him and his. And, thirdly, that our Lord the Pope having freer rule in England, civil possessions may be more plentifully heaped upon the abbeys without the check of fraternal rebuke."<sup>3</sup> Accordingly

<sup>1</sup> He describes himself as "*peculiaris regis clericus*" (Lewis, p. 349), and is taunted by his opponent Cunningham with being of the house of Herod.—Fasc. Ziz. p. 14.

<sup>2</sup> *Life of Wiclif*, p. 349. Lewis's text is very bad; "the fault of his MS.," says Dr. Shirley. There is a copy at Lambeth (No. 537), in the handwriting of Dr. James, which is very much better, and I have corrected my quotations from this.

<sup>3</sup> *Et miroꝝ quam plurimum quare cum tanta instantia expetunt [? expetivit] solutionem hujus rationis et tractatum istius materie, et specialiter cum tantum sit ipsa mihi et rationibus meis indifferens sicut cuicunque speculativo theologo vel legistæ. Et pepigimus quod non querendo divitulas alienas, peripsimata fructus quas colimus, vel ambages procedet directe ad improbandum questionem quam principaliter pepigit impugnare. Sed tres causæ dictæ sunt mihi cur hoc facit; primo ut persona mea sit ad Romanam Curiam diffamata et aggravatis censuris ab ecclesiasticis beneficiis sit privata. Secundo, ut exhinc sibi et suis benevolentia Romanæ Curie sit reportata. Et tertia causa, ut, dominante domino Papa regno Angliæ liberius, copiosius et voluptuosius sine freno correptionis fraternæ sint Abbathiis civilia dominia cumulata.*—Lewis, 351.

Wyclif refuses to pronounce upon the question, but contents himself with setting out the answers which he has heard given in a certain council of lay lords. Now there can be little doubt as to the occasion referred to by Wyclif. In 1366 Urban V. claimed the arrears of tribute due under John's vassalage. Edward referred the claim to Parliament, which rejected it without hesitation, on the ground that John had no power to bind the realm without its assent; and the lay lords offered further that if the Pope should make any attempt to enforce his claim, they would resist it with all their might.<sup>1</sup> We have then in this paper of Wyclif's what purports to be a partial report of the debate on this occasion, and it is accepted as such alike by Dr. Lechler and Dr. Shirley.<sup>2</sup> I confess to much doubt on this point. I can believe that some, and even most, of the arguments given in the tract were used in the Council-room; but the speeches recorded are curiously Wyclifite in their tone, and the parliaments of Edward the Third's time must have been singularly unlike those that have succeeded them if each speaker confined himself to urging one definite and distinct point as in this report. Whatever the lords really said, their chief use here is to act as mouthpieces for opinions which Wyclif wished to support, and from this point of view the tract is important, as showing how many of his characteristic tenets he had already arrived at. Thus from the speech of the second lord we see that Wyclif already held that voluntary poverty was incumbent on the clergy. The third lord treats the Pope with a roughness which Wyclif, speaking in his own person, would hardly have ventured on until later in his career. He argues that tribute can only be due to the servant of the servants of God<sup>3</sup> in return for service, and "we know by

<sup>1</sup> Rot. Parl. II. 290a.

<sup>2</sup> Lechler, i. 330; Shirley, F. Z. xix. Dr. Shirley is mistaken in saying, "We know that it set the question at rest for ever." Gregory XI. repeated the demand in 1374, and we have a curious account of the way in which it was met and refused in the continuation of the *Eulogium Historiarum*, iii. 337. We might fancy that this was a misplaced narrative of what took place in 1366 but for the prominent part played by the Prince of Wales, who was out of England in that year. We assign Wyclif's tract to the earlier occasion, on the ground that the phrase about "ecclesiastical benefices" refers probably to the Canterbury Hall Wardenship.

<sup>3</sup> *Servus servorum Dei*, the title generally used by the Pope of himself in bulls and formal letters.

experience that we get neither bodily nor spiritual help from Pope or Cardinals.”<sup>1</sup> Passing by the rest we must note the sixth lord's speech. “Since,” he says, “Christ is the chief lord, and the Pope is a sinner who, according to the theologians, if in mortal sin lacks dominion, and cannot consequently transmit to the English any right to the kingdom, all we need for a true dominion over the realm is to keep ourselves from mortal sin and give of our wealth rightly to the poor, and so hold our kingdom, as hitherto, immediately from Christ, since he is the chief lord, giving of himself full and sufficient authority to all dominion of the creature.” Here we have clearly laid down the famous doctrine of dominion as founded in grace, of which more must be said presently. Meanwhile the tone of the tract shows that Wyclif was actively engaged in political life. “If,” says he, “I had such things to assert against my king, they would have been brought forward before now in the parliament of the lords of England,”<sup>2</sup> and this remark gives some colour to Dr. Lechler's supposition that Wyclif had a seat in Parliament.<sup>3</sup> Dr. Lechler even goes further, and takes the description “*peculiaris regis clericus*” to mean that Wyclif was summoned to the Parliament of 1366 as a clerical expert, or, in modern phrase, as a Government Commissioner. The clerks of Parliament were, I believe, appointed by the House, and I doubt if any one else was admitted to the sittings besides the elected members, but it is possible that Wyclif may have been summoned to the Great Council.<sup>4</sup>

Whatever the official position which Wyclif occupied, he was not at this time a solitary advocate of novel ideas, but a

<sup>1</sup> *Cum non edificat regnum nostrum, nec spiritualiter nec corporaliter, sed defalcando temporalia per se et suos, confortat pecunia, favore et consilio inimicos, videtur quod debemus provide premissam pensionem subtrahere.*—Lewis, 352. I should find no difficulty in believing that such language as this was used in the debate; it is characteristic of the temper of the time.

<sup>2</sup> Lewis, 350.

<sup>3</sup> Lechler, i. 331 et seq. It must, however, be remarked that the taunt conveyed here would be more effective if it meant that his opponent had a seat in Parliament, but wanted courage to speak out there.

<sup>4</sup> See Stubbs' *Const. Hist.* ii. 259, 260. There are at least two other occasions on which Wyclif speaks of having heard something in Parliament. See Shirley, *F. Z.* xxi. and Lechler, i. 332.

prominent supporter of views which were popular in the country. The laity, and especially the gentry, were straitened in their means. The wealth, which in the earlier and more brilliant years of the French war poured in from plunder and ransoms, had been wasted, and the heavy taxation aroused a jealousy of the clergy, who seemed in comparison but lightly burdened. Englishmen were also jealous of the power wielded by the Papal Court, now seated at Avignon, and in too close relations with their French enemies. In 1371 this jealousy of the clergy found vent in a petition from the Commons that the great offices of state should be taken from the bishops who held them and entrusted to lay hands.<sup>1</sup> In the same year the taxation of the clergy was made heavier, and special attention was directed to lands held by the Religious which, having come into mortmain since 1291, were subject to pay their share of a lay subsidy.<sup>2</sup> A passage quoted by Dr. Shirley<sup>3</sup> from Wyclif's treatise on Civil Dominion makes it appear that the confiscation of endowments to support the war was spoken of seriously in Parliament.

In the following year distrust of Avignon was roused anew by the advent of a papal collector, one Arnold Guarnerius. He was compelled to take an oath to be true and loyal to the King, to keep the Council informed as to all letters, papal or others, that he received, and neither to send money out of the realm, nor to leave it himself without special licence.<sup>4</sup> Still more significative of the temper of the Commons is a petition of this year praying the King to deprive any beneficed priest or curate who lives openly with a concubine, if after six months the Ordinary has failed to do so.<sup>5</sup> Evidently the times were changed since Becket carried the popular voice with him in claiming freedom from the lay courts for clergymen even when guilty of crime.

While the nation was thus ill-disposed towards the whole ecclesiastical system, its disgust and indignation were specially directed against the Papal Court, and against the provisions by which the French Pope was able to bestow rich English benefices

<sup>1</sup> Rot. Parl. ii. 304.

<sup>2</sup> Fasc. Ziz. xxi.

<sup>3</sup> Rot. Parl. ii. 314.

<sup>2</sup> Stubbs, Const. Hist. ii. 423.

<sup>4</sup> Rymer, iii. p. ii, 933.

on foreigners who never came near their cure.<sup>1</sup> Year after year the Parliament renewed its complaints, until, in 1374, a mission was sent to Bruges to treat with the Pope's representatives on this matter. Wyclif was one of the Commissioners, and his name was put prominently forward; but even then the trick was known of putting a popular man on a commission, and neutralizing his efforts by associating him with obstructives. The King and the Pope had their jealousies and their quarrels, but they could often work together to mutual profit, and the system was practically left untouched, to be a cause of remonstrance to many more parliaments. Within a few months the law against provisions was repealed, and a papal provision translated the head of the Commission, Gilbert, Bishop of Bangor, to the richer see of Hereford.

We may well suppose, with Dr. Lechler, that this embassy, however fruitless as to its main object, was not without effect on Wyclif himself. As far as we know it was the first time he had been out of England, and his stay in Bruges<sup>2</sup> brought him into contact with leading ecclesiastics—Spanish, French, and Italian—and gave him an insight into the ways and motives of the Papal Court. There is another manner in which it may have influenced his career. John of Gaunt was at Bruges, engaged in negotiations with France, and is likely to have come into closer relation with Wyclif than before.

The time was coming when Wyclif would need a protector. In 1377 the first attempt was made to call him to account. He had been snarling at the Church for some time, we are told, in revenge for his deprivation of the Wardenship of Canterbury Hall, and had begun to promulgate false opinions such as, in

<sup>1</sup> Die Gemeinen befanden sich in ihrem vollen Rechte. Nicht etwa vom wycliffischen sondern vom strengkatholischen Standpunkte aus musste getadelt werden, wenn vom Kircheneinkommen jährlich mehr als 20,000 Mark dem in Avignon residirenden Papste und den Cardinalen zufließen, von welchen man sich nach kurzer Zeit (1378) überzeugen konnte, wie wenig ihnen die Interessen der Kirche am Herzen lagen. Ihre Interessen bestanden darin, dass ein Cardinal Dechant von York, ein anderer von Salisbury, ein dritter von Lincoln, drei andere Erzdechanten von Canterbury, von Durham und Suffolk, mehrere Praebendarien von Tham, von Nassington, von York waren.—C. Höfler, Anna von Luxemburg, p. 17. Höfler, a Catholic, may be trusted not to exaggerate abuses.

<sup>2</sup> He was away from July 7th to September 14th.

spite of their emptiness, tickled the ears of those who listened to him.<sup>1</sup> Of his false doctrines only a few are specified, and those not the worst. They are—that the Pope has no power in binding and loosing more than other priests; that endowments cannot be given in perpetuity, since it will always be right to withdraw them from unworthy holders; and that temporal lords, if in need, may seize the possessions of the endowed clergy.<sup>2</sup> He gained many followers of high rank,<sup>3</sup> among whom were the Duke of Lancaster and Lord Henry Percy, and relying on their support preached his heresies boldly in London, and attracted many of the citizens. At last the Bishops (Courtenay probably the most active among them) stirred up the Archbishop of Canterbury, Simon Sudbury, who but for the pressure put on him would have preferred a quiet life, and Wyclif was summoned to appear at St. Paul's on February 23. He obeyed the summons, but not after the fashion of one who has to humble himself before men in authority. He was accompanied by Lord Henry Percy and the Duke. They forced their way violently through the crowd assembled in the Cathedral, in spite of the rebuke of the Bishop of London, who declared he would have refused them entrance had he expected such behaviour. Having reached the Lady Chapel, where the Court was to be held, the Duke and Barons took their place beside the Bishop, and Lord Henry Percy bade Wyclif be seated. "He had need of a soft seat since he had many things to answer." Courtenay not unreasonably insisted on his standing while his cause was being tried. This led to a quarrel, in which the Duke joined; but in strong language the Bishop was a match for the two. Some hasty words of the Duke's caused an excitement among the

<sup>1</sup> *Chronicon Angliæ*, 115. My narrative here is mainly an abridgment of that in the *Chronicon*.

<sup>2</sup> These charges seem to be fairly stated, with the reservation that by "temporal lords" must be understood the government of the state, acting for public purposes.

<sup>3</sup> Wyclif's strongest supporters seem to have been among the gentry. "Oo comfort is of knyghtis," he says, "þat þei savoren myche þe gospel and han wille to rede in Englishe þe gospel of Cristis liif."—*Sermon lxxvi.* (*S. E. W.* i. 209.) Until he sent out his poor preachers, he could only appeal to those who had wealth to get books and education to read them.

crowd of citizens, and in the tumult the Court broke up without having accomplished anything.<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Shirley attributes all these proceedings to the Bishops' wish to strike at John of Gaunt through his client, and this may well have been one among several motives that urged them to action. Yet apart from this they had reasons enough for desiring to silence Wyclif. To say nothing of the hatred that greedy men bear to those who threaten their gains (and there was much greed among the higher clergy), we cannot doubt that the mass of churchmen, then as always, wished to see the Church increasing in wealth, honour, and worldly influence.<sup>2</sup> How could they but be shocked at a priest who aimed at stripping the Church of endowments, and reducing its prelates from the magnificence, in which they vied with the greatest nobles, to a simple life, where the only rivalry should be in poverty and humility? If the Bishops were slow to act, it was probably because they knew how strongly Wyclif was supported, and dreaded the storm which they were sure to arouse; and it may even be true, as Walsingham tells us, that it needed the Pope's command to goad them into activity. In any case this first move had failed. It may have had the result of making Lancaster more unpopular, but it left Wyclif's position at least as strong as before he was attacked.

News must soon have reached Rome<sup>3</sup> that the heretic had baffled the attempt to silence him, and that the assault must be renewed in a more formal and deliberate manner. Nineteen conclusions attributed to Wyclif were selected, and condemned as erroneous or heretical.<sup>4</sup> It is probably to the time when this

<sup>1</sup> Walsingham, whose account is much shorter than that in the *Chronicon*, differs materially on two points. He says that the prosecution was due to the orders of the Pope, and that the result of the Council was that the Archbishop imposed silence on Wyclif.—Wals. i. 325.

<sup>2</sup> A good example of such feeling in an honest churchman is Laud's exultation at the appointment of Juxon as treasurer, "and now if the Church will not hold up themselves under God, I can do no more."—Quoted by Mr. Gardiner, *Personal Government of Charles I.*, ii. 246.

<sup>3</sup> Gregory had arrived there from Avignon in January.

<sup>4</sup> These were picked out from a list of about fifty which had been sent to the Curia.—Appendix to *Chron. Angliæ*, p. 396. It is to be regretted that due honour has not been done to the senders. One of the most interesting and most hopeless problems in this matter is, whence came the first impulse to a prosecution.

list was being prepared, and when the Bishops, smarting under defeat, were looking forward to their revenge, that we must assign an outburst of the Bishop of Rochester, who told Wyclif in Parliament that his conclusions had been condemned by the Curia.<sup>1</sup> The Roman Court had evidently determined that the work should be done effectively this time. A series of bulls was sent over to England. One was addressed to the University of Oxford, and ordered that Wyclif should not under any pretence be allowed to defend his evil teaching, but should at once be arrested and delivered to the Archbishop of Canterbury or the Bishop of London. To these two prelates came three other bulls; one enjoining them to warn the King and nobles against Wyclif's errors; another commanding them to secure Wyclif at once, and examine him as to the doctrines of which he was accused, to send to Rome a report of the examination, and keep him in chains until the Pope's pleasure was made known. In case they should be unable to carry out these instructions, the third bull instructed them to summon Wyclif to appear in the Papal Court for judgment within three months. A fifth bull was addressed to the King, praying him to facilitate the execution of the others.<sup>2</sup>

The bulls do not seem to have met with an eager welcome. The Bishops were probably disheartened by their recent failure, and saw that the times were unpropitious, for the King was on his death-bed and Lancaster was the chief power in the State,<sup>3</sup> so they lay by for awhile and made no attempt to execute their commission. True, soon after Richard's coronation, Lancaster withdrew from public life for a short period; but the government was not more favourable to Rome than before. At this very time, when Wyclif was under the shadow of the papal condemnation, the Great Council asked for his judgment on the question whether they could rightly refuse to allow money to be carried out of the realm in spite of the Pope's demands. His

<sup>1</sup> Unde episcopus Roffensis dixit mihi in publico parlamento stomachando spiritu, quod conclusiones mee sunt dampnatæ, sicut testificatum est sibi de curia per instrumentum notarii.—*De Ecclesia*, c. 15; quoted by Lechler, i. 332.

<sup>2</sup> The bulls are in Walsingham, i. 345, and *Chron. Angliæ*, 174.

<sup>3</sup> The bulls were dated May 22nd. Edward III. died June 21.



answer is uncompromising.<sup>1</sup> He does not merely allow that they may refuse, he insists that they are bound to do so. As to the dangers attending such a course, it is not likely, he says, that the Pope will lay an interdict on England; and "even if the disciple of Antichrist should break forth into such madness, one comfort is that such pretended censures are not binding before God."<sup>2</sup> He goes on to urge that the superfluous wealth of the clergy should be withdrawn from them, and what is left so used as to establish true peace in the Church. This indirect challenge was bold enough; and soon afterwards, at the meeting of Parliament, Wyclif laid before it a pamphlet in which he enumerated the charges brought against him, and defended himself on each.<sup>3</sup> To the public he appealed in another tract, written anonymously, specially directed against the validity of unjust excommunication, which if allowed, he says, would set the Pope above God, and ruin the Christian Church.<sup>4</sup> Seven months after the date of the bulls the Commissaries plucked up courage to proceed. On December 18th they sent down a letter to the University, inclosing the Pope's bulls, and ordering their execution. The University was to gather all possible information concerning the conclusions and send it on to the Bishops, while Wyclif was to be cited to appear before them after thirty days.<sup>5</sup> Immediately on the receipt of the letter, a congregation was held to consider what course should be taken. Wyclif and his friends maintained that to imprison him at the Pope's request would be to allow the Pope's rule in England. On the other hand, it was generally felt that the papal command could not be entirely disregarded, and the Vice-Chancellor (a monk)

<sup>1</sup> Printed in Fasc. Ziz. p. 258.

<sup>2</sup> Sed supposito quod Antichristi discipulus prorumpet in tantam vesaniam, unum solamen est quod tales prætensæ censuræ non obligant quoad Deum.—F.Z. 265. This is a reaffirmation of the doctrines condemned in Conclusions Nos. 8, 15.

<sup>3</sup> Fasc. Ziz. 245.

<sup>4</sup> De Condemnatione XIX Conclusionum.—Fas. Ziz. 481, etc. To these tracts of defence and counter attack we may add one on the oath taken by the Papal Collector in 1372 (see above, p. viii), where Wyclif urges that the Collector should be looked after more strictly and made to keep his oath. We cannot fix an exact date to this tract, but it belongs to the beginning of Richard's reign. Printed in Lechler, ii. 576.

<sup>5</sup> The letter is in Lewis, Appendix No. 17, p. 314.

ordered Wyclif to remain a prisoner in Black Hall.<sup>1</sup> The conclusions were then submitted to the regent masters in Theology, and these gave in their opinions to the Chancellor, who determined on their behalf that the conclusions were true, but likely to cause scandal.<sup>2</sup> The writer to whom we owe this account goes on to say that Wyclif proved the truth of the conclusions before the Archbishop and the Bishop of London, who requested him to cease from discussing the subject of them.<sup>3</sup> We may doubt whether his unaided arguments would have been so convincing, but he was strongly supported. The London populace, which had now rallied to his support, broke into the chapel at Lambeth and interrupted the proceedings. What was of far more weight, the Princess Joan sent a message forbidding any decision against Wyclif, which struck such terror into the Bishops that they became as a man that heareth not, and in whose mouth are no reproofs.<sup>4</sup> And, as if this interference had not sufficiently indicated the leanings of the Court, the Vice-Chancellor of Oxford was called to account for his partial obedience to the Pope's commands, was thrown into prison for a time, and compelled to resign his office.<sup>5</sup> Soon afterwards the Pope died, and no further action was taken upon the bulls.

It may be supposed that Wyclif was not cowed by this prosecution. He drew up a summary of his opinions in thirty-three conclusions, which he circulated in Latin and English, and which were in some way forwarded to the Roman Court. Yet he had to be careful for his personal safety, and did not appear when cited again, for he had been told that the Archbishop had applied to him the text, "a little while and ye shall see him, and again a little while and ye shall not see him." He adds that many are taught (he knows not by whom) that it

<sup>1</sup> The imprisonment was evidently merely formal, and it seems likely that Wyclif lodged at Black Hall. There may have been two Halls of that name, as in *Mun. Acad.* (p. 240) we find mention of a "little Black Hall."

<sup>2</sup> *Eas veras esse sed male sonare in auribus auditorum.*—*Eulogium Historiarum* (continuation), iii. 347.

<sup>3</sup> The paper presented in his defence is in *Chron. Angliæ*, 184, *Wals.* i. 357.

<sup>4</sup> *Chron. Angliæ*, 183. *Wals.* i. 356.

<sup>5</sup> *Eulogium Historiarum*, iii. 348.

would be a work of charity to put him out of the way by burning or otherwise.<sup>1</sup>

A novel ferment was now introduced into Wyclif's active mind. Urban VI. had been Pope only a few months when the Cardinals, alienated by his fierce temper and desirous to return to Avignon, elected an Antipope, Clement VII. The rivals at once began to contend by force of arms for the spiritual fatherhood of Christendom. Each proclaimed a crusade, offering unheard-of indulgences to all who supported him, and pardon-mongers spread abroad through Europe, vaunting their wares with a cynicism unsurpassed by Tetzel.<sup>2</sup> No wonder that Wyclif was deeply moved, and that we may now mark a new departure in his teaching. Hitherto, however severely he spoke of the Pope and the Curia, he had acknowledged the primacy of the Roman See; now he began to proclaim that the Church would be better without a Pope. Nor is the change in him confined to an alteration in his views as to the constitution of the Church. Hitherto we have seen him mixed up with practical politics, taking part in them from the ecclesiastical side and for religious purposes, but as counsellor or pamphleteer urging, supporting or defending the policy carried out by lay statesmen. Henceforth he withdraws into the purely religious domain, and contents himself with striving by personal influence and writing to purge the Church of abuses, and induce his countrymen to purer and more spiritual views of religion. We must not, however, exaggerate the change in him, which was probably unconscious. In relating the middle period of Wyclif's life, the biographer necessarily dwells on the moments when his subject comes out into full light and shows himself engaged in action, and passes over the unrecorded private life, and that quiet work of influencing friends and disciples, which may have been the most important of activities. In the lives of most men of letters the years are marked by the succession of books, but

<sup>1</sup> See the quotation from the *De Veritate Sanctæ Scripturæ* in *Fasc. Ziz. xxxiv.*

<sup>2</sup> *Dicebatur enim quod quidam de Commissariis suis asserebant quod ad eorum præceptum angeli de cælo descenderent et animas in purgatorii locis positas de pœnis eriperent et ad cælos absque mora deducerent.*—Knighton, 2671. Compare the account of the proceedings of the Cardinal of St. Praxed.—Wals. i. 452.

although the mass of Wyclif's work shows that his literary production was unceasing, we are still unacquainted with the details of it. We cannot date with certainty any of his books written before 1378, and until his works are printed we cannot hope to range them even approximately in order, or to trace their relation to his active life. But in spite of all difficulty as to dates, we cannot doubt that by this time he had set his hand to two great tasks of a purely religious character—the training of his poor priests, and the translation of the Bible.

Wyclif's aim in instituting the poor priests was to supply the defects of the existing parsons, who too often, after collecting their tithes and dues, held the saying of services to be their only duty, and left their flock without preaching or spiritual instruction. The want had long been felt, and the mendicant orders were founded in the attempt to meet it. Preaching had been the distinctive work of the Dominicans, while the Franciscans had settled in the worst and most neglected parts of the towns and had laboured assiduously among the poor. But societies which lived by begging were always tempted to win popular favour in unworthy ways, and before the end of the fourteenth century the friars had won an unenviable reputation, which may be read in every story-book or satire of the time. The task that they had failed in was yet to be done, and Wyclif tried to train men to do it. "To be poor without mendicancy," says Dr. Shirley, "to combine the flexible unity, the swift obedience of an order, with free and constant mingling among the poor, such was the ideal of Wyclif's simple priests."<sup>1</sup> And he goes on to suggest that, if Wyclif had died before his denial of transubstantiation, "his name might have come down to us in another form, and miracles have been wrought at the tomb of their founder by the brothers preachers of St. John Wyclif." In this last suggestion Dr. Shirley scarcely does justice to Wyclif's practical insight. The tendency of all human things to crystallize into set forms might have made the poor priests into an order, but if so the spirit and intention of their founder would have been lost. No formal initiation, no irrevocable

<sup>1</sup> *Fasc. Zix. xl.*

vow, indeed no vows at all, seem to have been required from these disciples of his. He set before them his ideal of the Christian ministry—voluntary poverty and faithful preaching—and urged them to act upon it. Their itinerancy was but an accident of the time, a means of meeting the difficulties that they were to encounter;<sup>1</sup> and to bind them by vows or special observances would have been directly contrary to the freedom of the gospel as Wyclif preached it. It must be noticed that Wyclif's views on this point are quite as important from the practical side as from the ideal. If you look upon an order or a rule of life as higher and more holy than others, you will naturally wish to attract men to it, and dread to injure them by exclusion; you will attempt to fortify them by vows and all other safeguards against falling back into a lower state; and in consequence you will be burdened with a number of adherents who have no real vocation, and are constantly seeking to adapt the rule to their requirements, instead of trying to live up to it.<sup>2</sup> Wyclif had before him the history of all the religious orders as a warning against this danger, and he seems specially to have shunned this rock which had been so fatal to them.<sup>3</sup> I take it that in the poor priests we are not to see the attempted foundation of a new order, but an effort to excite and utilize the energies of individuals who had come under Wyclif's influence.

Of his other religious task, the translation of the Bible, I need say little; its consequence to English religion and the English tongue is generally recognized. We have but to look at the long list of MSS. given at the beginning of Forshall and Madden's great edition,<sup>4</sup> and to remember that these are but

<sup>1</sup> See the tract, *Why poor priests have no benefice*, No. XVI., especially the close, and the *De Officio Pastoralis*, No. XXVII.

<sup>2</sup> "And þis is a gret disceit of þe fend under colour of perfeccion and chastite. For he stireþ men to heije poyntis of perfeccion when he knowiþ or supposiþ hem unable."—S. E. W. iii. 190.

<sup>3</sup> "It is lycli þat Cristis preestis, þat stooden til þat monkes comen, turneden to myche fro Cristis lawe and monkes lyveden þan wel beter. But þes monkes stoden awhile, and turneden souner to coveitise; and aftir monkes camen þes chanouns; and after chanouns camen freris. And so greet defaute was in preestis bifore þat þes newe ordris camen in. But as þes newe ordris changen in cloþis, in bokis, wip oþer ritis, so þei varien in Goddis office fro þat þat Crist bad his preestis do."—*The Church and Her Members*, S. E. W. iii. 345.

<sup>4</sup> There are 170 numbers.

the gleanings, after time, neglect, and the zeal of the inquisitor have gathered in their harvests, and we see how widely the translation was disseminated; how eagerly men caught at the opportunity of reading the Bible in their mother-tongue.

These labours, even without the further evidence supplied by his books, are enough to show that when most engaged in politics Wyclif's aim was religious reform, and that he was not merely an ecclesiastical agitator. Many causes may have combined to withdraw him from the political arena. Dr. Shirley suggests that Urban's removal from Avignon, and still more his quarrel with the King of France, had restored the popularity of the Papacy, and that Wyclif was no longer supported against Rome by the national feeling; but the strong petition against provisions and Urban's abuse of them in the parliament of January, 1380,<sup>1</sup> shows that the English jealousy of the Curia was not overpast. Probably as Wyclif became more and more involved in theological controversies, his eagerness as to public affairs decreased; while the passions which he had roused against him made him less valuable as an ally or an agent. We shall presently see cause to believe that he had not forfeited the favour of his powerful protectors.

The immediate effect of the Great Schism, and the quarrels which accompanied it, was to bring Wyclif into undisguised opposition to the Papacy as an institution; and once fairly started in his campaign, he directed his assault against the whole line of the Church system then existing. The luxurious and worldly lives of monks and prelates; the prevalence of unworthy influence and simony in the presentation to benefices; the gross abuses of the bishops' and archdeacons' courts, especially the practice of exacting fines for incontinence and other sins instead of requiring amendment; all these gave wide scope for denunciation. Even the most orthodox reckoned such things wrong, and men who were canonized saints had inveighed against them as bitterly as Wyclif; but there was this novelty in his method that, instead of laying all blame on individuals, he looked for the root of the evil in the authorized constitution and

<sup>1</sup> Rot. Parl. iii. 82.

practices of the Church. Thus when he attacked the luxury of the prelates, he did not content himself with lamenting that his contemporaries had fallen so far from the apostolic standard, but denounced the principle of endowment, introduced as he believed by Constantine, and urged the rulers of the State to take away the riches which corrupted the Church. He found another weapon against the dominant hierarchy in appealing to the presbyterian constitution of the primitive Church, in which bishops and priests were the same.<sup>1</sup> The bishops, he says, have reserved to themselves confirmation, ordination, and the consecration of places, but such reservations hinder and do not profit the Church.<sup>2</sup>

Against the grossly superstitious customs of the day Wyclif's method was the same. The root of almost all these was a belief in the unlimited effect of the priest's absolution, and in the power of the Church to grant indulgences. Without this the pardon-mongers would have gone away empty; the shrines would have remained unvisited; no throng of pilgrims would have poured money into the Roman treasury; no gold and jewels would have been lavished at Walsingham and Canterbury. Wyclif declared that only true penitence and confession to God were needed to gain his pardon, and that the enforcement of private confession was a mischievous practice of late introduction. He scorned as a fiction the doctrine of saints' merits laid up in reserve at the disposal of the Pope.<sup>3</sup> All merit, he

<sup>1</sup> Sed unum audacter assero, quod in primitiva ecclesia ut tempore Pauli suffecerunt duo ordines clericorum scilicet sacerdos atque diaconus. Secundo dico quod in tempore apostoli fuit idem presbyter atque episcopus . . . . tunc enim non fuit adinventata distinctio papæ et cardinalium, patriarcharum et archiepiscoporum, episcoporum et archidiaconorum, officialium et decanorum cum ceteris officiariis et religionibus privatis quorum non est numerus neque ordo.—Trial. lib. iv. cap. 15, p. 296.

<sup>2</sup> Itaque omnes operationes concernentes sacerdotes cesarios, in quantum tales, non proficiunt directe ad beatitudinem, sed impediunt vel retardant. Et ita est de tribus dignitatibus sive officiis que episcopus sibi servat; que sunt juvenum confirmacio, clericorum ordinacio et locorum consecratio.—Dialogus, c. 24, MS. Ashburnham, 1116.

<sup>3</sup> And so þis fonned fantasye of spiritual tresour in hevене, þat eche pope is maad dispensour of þis tresour at his owne will, þis is a list word, dremed wipouten ground. For þanne ech pope schulde be lord of þis hevēly tresour, and so he schulde be lord of Crist and opere seyntis in hevēne, ȝe, ȝif he were a fend, as was Judas Schariot. Lord! whi schulde God of hevēne make þis fend such a lord? siȝ it is propre unto God to dele such meritis, and alle meritis þat beȝ in hevēne beȝ fully rewarded, so þat none is ydil, but nedlyche mut be do.—De Pontificum Romanorum Schismate, S. R. W. iii. 262.

says, is in the hands of God, who keeps to himself the distribution of it. Not only so, but the Pope cannot know the real state of a man, and may grant pardon to one who is in mortal sin, and unable to profit by the gift.<sup>1</sup> With indulgences went all the cognate practices: letters of fraternity, special prayers, masses for particular souls. That these things were widely abused was evident to all, and many a parish priest and prelate would have been glad to see some check placed upon the friars, who were the worst offenders. The evils might have been partially restrained by stricter discipline and the withdrawal of exemptions; but they could be ended only by uprooting the doctrines of which they were the outgrowth. Wyclif seems to have grasped this fact, and to have worked more strenuously against the various forms of indulgence and assigned merit than against any other tenets of the Church. His sagacity was vindicated when, after a century and a half, during which the orthodox reformers had proved their impotence, Luther selected the same point for his first and deadliest assault.

It is not necessary to discuss the minor points in which Wyclif departed from Church tradition, and we may pass on to the great development which marked his last years—his attack on the doctrine of Transubstantiation. Here he was upon new and dangerous ground. Hitherto he had been able to appeal to the moral sense of the laity, and had sometimes been supported by their prejudices and passions. They might care little for the doctrine of Dominion in its scholastic form, but they welcomed eagerly the bold assailant of the outrageous claims and exactions of the Papacy; and this all the more when the Pope was French and an enemy. The magnificence and worldliness of the prelates, the extortions and abuses of the ecclesiastical courts, evidently wanted reform, and there was no need to look closely into the grounds on which reform was urged. Even when Wyclif ventured into a more dogmatic region; when he questioned the priestly power of absolution and the Pope's

<sup>1</sup> Nec indulgentiis debemus credere, sicut nec papa vel sua curia, cum nescit si ista persona cui concedit dictam indulgentiam sit dampnanda; sicut nec scit si sit voluntatis dei concedere quod ipse annuit sic in bullis.—*Dialogus*, c. 13, MS. Ashb. ff. 103b.



authority in purgatory; when he struck at indulgences, special masses, and the numberless devices for making money do the work of goodness and setting future blessedness up to sale, he had still on his side the spiritual instincts of his audience; he was in many cases censuring abuses which were against the authoritative teaching of the Church, although supported by almost all her officers.

In the campaign on which he now entered no such appeal to the interests of morality could serve his turn. The doctrine which he impugned was the result of a constant and instinctive desire on the part of the Christian Church to heighten the dignity of its central act of worship, combined with an unshrinking intellectual analysis. It had been the business of the schoolmen to find a rational and logical theory corresponding to the highest utterances of mystical devotion. The popular mind, intolerant of subtleties, knew nothing of substance or accidents, and when Wyclif raised a question as to the nature of the consecrated bread, his opponents accused him of denying Christ's presence in the host, while his followers fancied that they settled the question by saying that any one could see the host was bread, and the very mice knew it for such.<sup>1</sup>

This simple appeal to the senses may have attracted some partisans, but the publication of novel ideas on such a point was certain to give offence to many devout persons, who felt as if the dignity of the sacrament was attacked. One is naturally led to ask what motives impelled Wyclif to this course, and the inquiry is of equal interest whether he be regarded as an earnest reformer or a hunter after popular favour. Perhaps the simplest and most direct way of getting at the truth is to take his own account of the matter: "Of all heresies that have ever sprung up in the Church, I think none was ever more cunningly brought in by hypocrites or cheats the people in more ways than this; for it robs the people, it makes them commit idolatry, it denies the faith of Scripture, and in consequence by unbelief provokes

<sup>1</sup> Wyclif himself throws this as a taunt against his opponents, "*Mures autem habent servatam notitiam de panis substantia sicut primo, sed istis infidelibus istud deest, etc.*"—Trial. iv. 5, p. 280.

the Truth in many ways to anger.”<sup>1</sup> This vehement denunciation, when translated into plain fact, seems to mean that the current doctrine led the people into an excessive and superstitious reverence for the elements of the Sacrament, and that this superstition was made the means of increasing the power and gain of the priesthood. It may be supposed that this is only the moral colouring which a controversialist tries to throw over a cause adopted for other and lower reasons. The decision on this point must depend on the bias of the judge; but in support of Wyclif's statement it may be noted that his opponent Tysington allows that the language used by controversialists might, if spoken before the people, lead them to heathenish notions.<sup>2</sup> I believe that if we look back to Wyclif's earlier utterances on this subject, made before he had come into collision with the orthodox opinion, we may trace the gradual development which led him to heresy. In a sermon preached, I believe, in 1367, he speaks of various errors relating to the host, and goes on: “It seems enough for the Christian to believe that the body of Christ is in some spiritual and sacramental manner at every point of the consecrated host, and that next after God honour is to be chiefly rendered to that body, and in the third place to that sensible sacrament, as to an image or tomb of Christ.”<sup>3</sup> This passage, as indeed the whole of the sermon in which it occurs, shows a disposition to dwell upon the spiritual side in preference to the logical or dogmatic account of the Sacrament. Such a disposition, not in itself incompatible with orthodoxy, was likely to be strengthened in him by a philosophical

<sup>1</sup> *Triologus*, iv. 2, p. 248.

<sup>2</sup> “Non tamen vulgariter et coram laicis conceditur communiter videri aut sentiri, nisi cum hac determinatione in forma et specie panis; ne populus pronus ad idolatriam, nesciens distinguere inter sensibile in se et sensibile in alio, credat speciem panis, aut aliud quod immediate et in se sentitur, esse corpus Christi; et sic, ut dictum est, turpiter paganizent.”—*Fasc. Ziz.* 173.

<sup>3</sup> Multi ex dicto isto capiunt occasionem erroris, putantes hii quod panis est corpus Christi, hii quod panis fiet et est corpus Christi, hii quod panis convertetur in corpus Christi per desicionem (sic) panis secundum quamlibet ejus partem, et sic de multis feticibus ex quibus infideles despiciunt fidem nostram. Videtur igitur satis esse Christiano credere quod corpus Christi sit quodam modo spirituali [et] sacramentali ad omne punctum hostie consecrate, et quod illi corpori sit post deo honor principaliter tribuendus, et tercio loco illi sacramento sensibili tanquam ymagini vel sepulcro Christi.—*Early Sermons*, No. XX. MS. Lambeth, 23.

difficulty in satisfying himself as to any theory of transubstantiation. On this point there is a connexion between his earliest and latest doctrines, which seems hitherto to have escaped the notice of his biographers. In one of his early works, 'De Ente,' a treatise of 350 closely-written folio pages, the last four chapters bear the sub-title 'De Adnichilacione,' and are devoted to proving that it is not in the power of God (*i.e.* is not in accordance with his nature) to annihilate anything.<sup>1</sup> Here, however, the orthodox doctrine of the Host has to be dealt with as an exception. If, as was generally held, the substance of the bread ceased to be at consecration, annihilation was taking place daily, and the denial of it was an open heresy. For a time Wyclif got over the difficulty by saying that "the substance of the bread is not annihilated, since its accidents remain, although it is changed as to its whole form."<sup>2</sup> Such subtle distinctions were not likely to disarm his adversaries,<sup>3</sup> or to continue to satisfy his own inquisitive and logical mind. A curious account of the changes in his opinions is given by his opponent Woodford, writing after his death: "While the said Master John," he says, "was a sententiary<sup>4</sup> at Oxford, and even a responding bachelor,<sup>5</sup> he held publicly and in the schools that, although the sacramental accidents were in a subject, yet that the bread ceased to exist at consecration. And being much questioned as to what was the subject of those accidents, for a considerable time he replied that it was a mathematical body. Afterwards, when this position had been much argued against, he answered that he did not know what the subject of the accidents was, yet he asserted clearly that they had a subject. Now in these

<sup>1</sup> I have tried to read these four chapters, but have to confess that the double crabbedness of contractions and scholastic reasoning make me unable to follow a good deal of them. Dr. Shirley has given some quotations from them in the preface to the *Fasciculi Zizaniorum*.

<sup>2</sup> *Substantia panis in eucharistia non annihilatur, propter remanentiam accidentium licet ipsa corrumpatur secundum totam formam.*—F. Z. lvii.

<sup>3</sup> Among a list of heresies "*quas primo jactavit in aera*" is "*Quod Deus non potest annihilare creaturam.*"—F. Z. 2. Dr. Shirley says that this doctrine had been actually condemned by Archbishop Langham (F. Z. xxvii); but he quotes no authority, and I have not yet met with the statement elsewhere.

<sup>4</sup> A student who had reached the period when he might lecture on the sentences, after which he might take his degree of B.D.

<sup>5</sup> A B.D. of two years' standing.

articles and in his confession he lays down expressly that the bread remains after consecration and is the subject of the accidents."<sup>1</sup> This account is no doubt substantially correct. Woodford's view of Wyclif is that of a heretic cunningly preparing his way and gradually increasing in audacity. A more sympathetic observer will see in the same facts the signs of a gradual and irresistible change, due to logical necessities which he shunned facing as long as possible. Had he been a solitary student he might have shunned them all his life; but, exposed to the conflict of the Schools, he was driven to find an explanation, and was too honest to maintain any which did not satisfy his own mind. When pressed he could not but see that to speak of a mathematical body as a substance was a scholastic figment; and not less artificial was the explanation that the substance in which the accidents of the host existed was a quality or a quantity.<sup>2</sup> Arrived so far, the next step was to fall back on the language of the Bible, and assert that since the bread was said to be Christ's body, the host was both bread and the body of Christ. This, however, was but the original statement of which the Church dogma was the explanation; the inevitable question was *how* the host could be both at once. Wyclif's reply came in short to this, that the presence was sacramental; that in some special way, which he could not define but which was not dimensional or corporal, Christ was present according to his promise. He threw on his opponents the charge that they denied the host to be either bread or Christ's body. Not bread, for its substance was gone, and all that remained was whiteness, roundness, etc.; not Christ's body, for, though they said that the body was at every point of the consecrated wafer, they did not admit that it was the wafer, or that the visible whiteness and roundness were accidents of the body.

It seems probable that Wyclif began to maintain these views publicly at Oxford in 1380. He was at this time in the thick of

<sup>1</sup> F. Z. xv. note 4.

<sup>2</sup> Fratres autem prudentiores sustinent quod ista hostia consecrata sit nichil in forma nichil. Nichil quidem est, quia vel est quantitas ut dicant predicatorum, vel qualitas ut dicunt minores, vel aggregatio ex eisdem. — De Sermone Domini in Monte, c. 29, MS. T.C.C. 364d.

a controversy on the lawfulness of the religious orders, on sturdy begging, and on the duty of monks, imposed even by their rule, to labour with their hands.<sup>1</sup> Doubtless his opponents were glad to draw him upon ground where they were the champions of Church doctrine rather than of their own practice. He soon formulated his opinions and committed himself to three conclusions,<sup>2</sup> which afterwards formed the base of the Archbishop's condemnation. The Chancellor of the University, William Berton, was an old adversary,<sup>3</sup> and seized his opportunity. He called together some doctors of theology and civil law, who unanimously condemned the novel teaching as heretical, and issued an order forbidding any one to maintain these assertions either in or out of the Schools. The condemnation was published in the School of the Augustines at the very moment when Wyclif was lecturing in support of his theses. He declared that neither the Chancellor nor any of those in league with him could alter his opinion, and appealed to the King.<sup>4</sup> In reply, John of Gaunt came down to Oxford and ordered him to speak no more on the subject. Wyclif, instead of obeying, issued his Confession, in which he stated his position clearly.<sup>5</sup> The University was in high excitement and a storm of pamphlets followed.

The Chancellor had forwarded a copy of his condemnation to the Archbishop of Canterbury, doubtless expecting him and the Bishops to take action in the matter; but in little more than a month Sudbury's head was struck off by the rebels on Tower Hill, and the see was vacant until November. Meanwhile within the University the controversy took a turn favourable to Wyclif. Probably this was due to the old-standing jealousy between the Seculars and the Religious. The quarrel, as we have seen, began with a discussion about the Orders, and the activity of the Monks and Friars may have driven their rivals to the side of

<sup>1</sup> Compare the account of controversies in F. Z. 239-241 with a poem printed in Wright's *Political Poems*, i. 253. A better text is given by Dr. Lechler, ii. 621.

<sup>2</sup> F. Z. 106.

<sup>3</sup> F. Z. 241.

<sup>4</sup> F. Z. 114. The writer blames him for appealing to the King instead of to "pope, bishop or ordinary." By the Statutes of the University his choice lay between King and Pope, all appeals to lower authorities being forbidden.—*Munimenta Acad.* 232.

<sup>5</sup> Printed in F. Z. 115.

Wyclif.<sup>1</sup> Moreover Berton's action in inviting the interference of the Archbishop may have roused the ready jealousy of episcopal meddling. From these or other motives the elections for the next year were favourable to the Wyclifite party, and returned a Chancellor and proctors in their interest.

Things were not going so well outside, at least among the governing classes, who found much to perplex them. The itinerant preachers were going their rounds as usual, regardless of the Bishops' prohibitions, declaiming against the friars, who were not slow to reply. The people threw themselves into the quarrel, and every sermon was an occasion for debate if not for actual fighting.<sup>2</sup> At the same time a wave of reaction, due to the rebellion of the previous year, was passing through the gentry, leading them into a fierce repression of disorder. Still there was a strong body among the Commons who charged the late disturbances on the Friars,<sup>3</sup> and it was probably in reliance on the support of this party that Wyclif when Parliament met laid before it seven propositions.<sup>4</sup> In these he asserted that the King did not owe obedience to the Pope, that money ought not to be sent out of the realm to Rome, that cardinals and others should not be allowed to hold benefices without rendering due service, and that it was the King's duty to confiscate the temporals of delinquent bishops or clerics. Beyond this he maintained that since Church endowment is the property of the poor, it might be used for State needs to prevent excessive taxation. Lastly, that the King ought not to employ bishops or curates in secular work.

<sup>1</sup> Of twelve doctors consulted by Berton, six were friars and two monks.

<sup>2</sup> *Vix aliquis eorum predicaret, quin ad pugnam inter se audientes provocarentur, et schismata in villis fierent.*—F. Z. 272. So too: "*Hoc anno (1382) fratrum elemosynę subtrahuntur, mendicantes laborari jubentur, predicare non sinuntur, denariorum prædicatores et domorum penetratores vocantur.*"—*Eulogium Hist. (cont.)* p. 355.

<sup>3</sup> See the letter of the Mendicant Orders to the Duke of Lancaster.—F. Z. 292. Jack Straw was reported to have confessed that the rebels meant to destroy all the endowed clergy, and leave only the friars alive.—Wals. ii. 10. As a countercheck to this John Ball was said to have described himself as a disciple of Wyclif.—F. Z. 273.

<sup>4</sup> "*Scribit ad dominos et magnates.*"—Wals. ii. 51. This may only mean that the propositions were circulated as a broadsheet or pamphlet among such of the nobles and gentry as were inclined to the Wyclifites.

Such a manifesto was sure to incense the orthodox party, and, if we may believe the writer of the *Fasciculi*, the Parliament pressed the Archbishop to make an end of these heresies.<sup>1</sup> Courtenay, nothing loath, summoned a Council to deliberate upon them. It met for business on May 21st<sup>2</sup> at the Dominican Convent (which stood where the *Times* Office now is, and left its name of Blackfriars to the neighbourhood), and unanimously condemned 24 conclusions as heretical or erroneous. Of ten denounced as heretical, the first three relate to the Eucharist, the remainder to Church government or endowment. The fourteen classed as erroneous deal with the power of prelates to excommunicate, the duty of preaching, and the uselessness of special prayers and religious orders. It will be seen that, as far as doctrine was concerned, the net was spread wide; since all the leading opinions for which Wyclif was notorious are enumerated and condemned. There is however no attack on him by name.

Meanwhile his supporters were busy at Oxford. On Ascension Day (May 15) Nicholas Herford preached a sermon in his defence, and another Wyclifite, Philip Repyndon, was appointed to preach on Corpus Christi Day at St. Frideswide. The orthodox party begged that this fresh scandal might be prevented, and the Archbishop sent down Peter Stokes, a

<sup>1</sup> "Milites et alii qui congregati sunt ex parte regni et parliamenti requirebant archiepiscopum cum suis suffraganeis ut finem facerent de talibus erroribus et hæresibus."—*F. Z.* 272. There is some reason to suspect that the author's wishes have coloured his narrative. Parliament met on the 7th, and the Council was summoned for the 17th, which shows rather an excess of promptitude in acting on the pressure of the members. But there is a stronger reason against accepting this version. To the acts of this Parliament on the Official Roll was appended one ordering the Sheriffs and other officers to arrest all wandering preachers at the request of the Bishop (Rot. Parl. III. 1246.). As soon as parliament met again at Michaelmas, the Commons prayed that this statute, to which they had not assented, might be cancelled. We may suppose that this entry was made by influential persons of the Church party to override opposition in the Commons. Courtenay needed no pressure to make him attack an old adversary.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Lechler says May 19th, following Netter's narrative (*F. Z.* 272); but in the acts of the Council we find May 21, both in *F. Z.* (p. 288) and in the Lambeth Register. The same date is given in Walsingham for the earthquake which took place while the Council was sitting.—*Wals.* ii. 66.

Carmelite and a headstrong opponent of Wyclif.<sup>1</sup> He arrived on the eve of the feast (June 4th) and presented his letters to the Chancellor. Next morning he was to proclaim the condemnation from the pulpit of St. Frideswide, and went to execute his commission, but he found Repyndon already in possession. The Chancellor was present in state, with the mayor of the town and an armed guard, while in the Church were some twenty men with arms concealed under their robes. Stokes, conscious that many errors remained for him to confute, did not yet desire martyrdom, so he sat trembling till the Chancellor and Repyndon had gone off together, and then slunk away. Next day he called on the Chancellor to verify his powers, and received an assurance that he should be helped in his task if the University would allow it. Stokes placed no faith in fair words. What would be done he could not tell, but he knew he was in danger of his life, and besought the Archbishop with tears not to allow him to perish.<sup>2</sup> A few days later (Tuesday, June 10) he mustered courage to dispute in the Schools in opposition to Repyndon, but even then he saw or fancied a dozen opponents with hidden weapons, and expected to have been slain before he could leave his chair. It must have been a relief to the timid inquisitor to receive, on the same day, letters recalling him to the Archbishop. Rigge, the Chancellor, was already in London, and at the second meeting of the Council he was called upon to justify himself. There is no reason to suppose that he really held Wyclifite opinions. He was one of the twelve Oxford doctors who condemned Wyclif's doctrines on the Eucharist when they were first broached,<sup>3</sup> and

<sup>1</sup> The Lollard poet gives a description of him—

*Tunc accessit alius, Stokis nominatus,  
rufus naturaliter et veste dealbatus,  
omnibus impatiens et nimis elatus  
et contra veridicos dirigens conatus.  
with an O and an I sub tam rubra pelle  
animus non habitat nisi mixtus felle.*—Lechler, ii. 631.

<sup>2</sup> *Unum autem venerabili paternitati vestre, si placet, notifico; quod in hac causa nihil ulterius audeo facere metu mortis. Unde et flebiliter vestrum imploro presidium ne occasione hujus causæ vel ego, vel socii mei, jacturam patiamur corporis atque vite.*—Letter from Stokes to the Archbishop, F. Z. 301.

<sup>3</sup> F. Z. 113.



his recent support of the Reformers, in which he was evidently backed by the University, was probably due to the corporate jealousy of the friars<sup>1</sup> and bishops. In the present case the University could count on support from neither King nor Pope and resistance to the hierarchy was unavailing. Rigge gave way at once. At the intercession of the Bishop of Winchester he was pardoned, and enjoined to prevent Wyclif and his followers from preaching or performing any scholastic act until they had purged themselves of the charges hanging over them.<sup>2</sup> He pleaded that he was afraid to execute the commission forced upon him, but his excuses were not allowed. His publication of the condemnation excited a storm of anger on the part of the seculars, who declared that the religious wished to ruin the University. The anger however was helpless, the corporate resistance of the University was crushed, and it remained only to deal with the individual offenders, who appealed in vain to the Duke of Lancaster, and were left to struggle hopelessly against the whole force of Church and State. In a few months all the Oxford leaders except Wyclif had been dealt with.<sup>3</sup> Strangely enough, we have no account of Wyclif during all this time. Knighton indeed says that he appeared before the bishops in Oxford and recanted, but the text of the recantation, as given by Knighton, is a strong assertion of the original heresy;<sup>4</sup> while the records of the Council which tell us all about the other heretics are silent as to Wyclif. It is to be

<sup>1</sup> The Lambeth Register gives a curious proof of the intensity of this jealousy. After Repyndon and Aston had recanted publicly before the Convocation which met at Oxford in November, Rigge, as Chancellor, accused Peter Stokes and two other friars of heresy. Their defence was that they had supported the false propositions only as a scholastic exercise. The Archbishop, "*videus gravem discordiam inter Universitatem et religiosos exortam fecit eos licet cum difficultate concordet, et dimisit eos in pace.*"

<sup>2</sup> Wyclif, Herford, Repyndon, Aston, and Bedeman are mentioned by name.—F. Z. 310.

<sup>3</sup> Bedeman recanted Oct. 18th, Repyndon Oct. 23rd, Aston Nov. 20th. Herford disappeared, and most probably went to Rome and was imprisoned there by the Pope.

<sup>4</sup> Höfler, *Anna v. Luxemburg*, p. 81, says that we may take the positive assertion of Knighton as to the recantation, and suppose that a wrong document was copied by mistake. One must have made up one's mind which way the facts ought to be to assert them on such authority.

noticed that throughout these transactions of 1382<sup>1</sup> he had been in the background, and it is possible that he had already retired to Lutterworth, but this alone would not have saved him at a time when his followers were hiding to avoid arrest. He once makes an allusion, which may possibly refer to this time: "I have pledged myself," he says, "not to use out of the Schools the term substance of material bread and wine."<sup>2</sup> This sounds as if he had been called to account, and had been dismissed on undertaking some formal conditions as to future controversy. But the form is not suitable to a man who was prohibited from all scholastic acts, and the passage may allude to the silence enjoined at an earlier period by the Duke of Lancaster.<sup>3</sup>

Why Wyclif was allowed to escape so easily is a puzzling question, and I cannot think that Dr. Lechler has accounted for it by the supposition that public feeling was favourable to him and prevented severe measures. More probably he had still powerful protection at Court, but if so it is curious that no chronicler makes any complaint of interference on his behalf. One last supposition is that he was already attacked by the paralysis which first struck him about two years before his death.<sup>4</sup> Whatever was the cause of his impunity, it seems that the condemnation of his doctrines had no direct effect upon him, except perhaps in driving him from Oxford. Evidently neither actual nor threatened evils made him bate one jot of heart or hope. His doctrines had been condemned, his friends scattered and silenced, and he was worn with age and palsied, yet in the prosecution of his work neither courage nor energy failed him, and his literary activity during this last period of his life would have been wonderful even in a man of full strength. Tracts, Latin and English, came in quick succession from his pen, and, as if these were not enough to occupy him,

<sup>1</sup> We learn nothing of his doings from the narrative in F. Z. 272-333, and Repyndon and Herford are the heroes of the Latin poem already quoted.

<sup>2</sup> Trial. iv. 36, p. 375.

<sup>3</sup> F. Z. 114, see above p. xxv.

<sup>4</sup> "Iste Wycleff fuit paralyticus per duos annos ante mortem suam, etc." This passage comes from an account of Wyclif's death, given by Gascoigne on the authority of John Horn, who had been Wyclif's curate for two years.—Printed in Lewis, 336.

he gave in the *Triologus* a complete and orderly summary of his doctrine, starting from the highest topics of abstract theology and coming down to details of doctrine and Church government. In his retirement at his quiet rectory of Lutterworth he could no longer exercise any immediate influence on the rulers of the country, but he watched with interest the course of events, and was strongly moved to indignation by Bishop Spencer's Flanders Crusade in 1383, an expedition as blundering in its management as it was immoral in the purpose and method of its undertaking. He recurs to it again and again, with an iteration which now at least is wearisome, sometimes dwelling only on the evils it had caused directly, more often on the scandalous traffic in indulgences by which money had been raised for its support. This enables us to date many of his later works, but otherwise there is little change to be noticed in him unless it be a more fixed and fervent conviction of the corruption of the Church and of the need of reform.

Outwardly his life was uneventful, but one doubt still hangs over the close of his career. It is commonly said that the summons to Rome, which fell through with the death of Gregory XI., was renewed by Urban, and that mortal sickness alone saved him from having to make his appearance before the Pope. A paper is extant which has always been taken for a letter to the Pope in answer to the summons.<sup>1</sup> Dr. Lechler remarks that this is not a letter, and is not addressed to the Pope, and that consequently we must reject the story of the summons.<sup>2</sup> I think he is clearly right in his premises; the form in which the paper is cast is certainly not such as would be adopted in a letter to the Pope; but I cannot follow him to his conclusion. The title given to the document in the *Fasciculi* shows that Walden believed Wyclif to have been summoned, and the letter itself reads to me like a justification of disobedience to the Pope's mandate, written for circulation in England. I incline to believe that Wyclif was summoned, and

<sup>1</sup> The English version is in S. E. W. iii. 504; the Latin in Fasc. Ziz. 341, with the title, "*Copia cujusdam literæ magistri Johannis Wyclyff missæ Papæ Urbano VI. ad excusationem de non veniendo sibi ad citationem suam, A.D. 1384.*"

<sup>2</sup> Lechler, i. 713 (English ed. ii. 284.)

further that he excused himself on the ground of illness, and received some support and protection from the King.<sup>1</sup> If the summons was issued about the time of the Council, it might partly account for Wyclif's escape from prosecution, since the bishops would not be concerned to judge one who was before a higher tribunal. Yet they would probably, as in 1377, be charged with the duty of sending him to Rome, and we should expect to find some notice of their attempting to execute their commission. On the whole it is most likely that a citation was issued in 1384. If so, the Pope had but little time to insist upon obedience. On Innocents Day, 1384, Wyclif was a second time struck with paralysis, while hearing mass in his church at Lutterworth. He lingered speechless for three days and died on Dec. 31st. His enemies saw a special judgment in his death on the feast of St. Sylvester, the Pope whom he had so often blamed as the first corrupter of the primitive Church.

In this sketch of Wyclif's life I have reserved one or two points for a more extended notice. First among these is his teaching as to "Dominion," important from the weight that he attached to it, and still more as having been the subject of more attack and misunderstanding than any other of his doctrines. His contemporaries accused him of using it to incite the populace to revolt and pillage, and the charge is still from time to time brought against him. Before attempting his defence I will try to make clear what the theory was, and in what form he upheld it.

The source and limit of Dominion was a question much discussed in the fourteenth century.<sup>2</sup> The claims of the papacy had been growing as its hold on the consciences of men was loosened. It was mainly upon religious and moral grounds that Gregory VII. rested in his quarrel with Henry IV.; his right of

<sup>1</sup> One of my chief grounds for this belief is Wyclif's tone in speaking of citations, which seems to me that of a man personally interested. To give my readers an opportunity of judging for themselves I have printed as an Appendix passages from two tracts in the Ashburnham MS.

<sup>2</sup> Es war die Eigenthumsfrage die brennende Frage der Zeit, die in tausendfacher Abwechslung immer von Neuem widerkehrte, gerade den scharfsinnigen wie auf die Besserung der Zeit gerichteten Mann unwiderstehlich anzog, sich mit ihr zu beschäftigen.—Constantin Höfler, Anna von Luxemburg, p. 20.

interference was based upon the crimes of the individual emperor rather than upon the general political supremacy of the Pope. No lofty moral or spiritual purpose could be ascribed to Clement VI. in his quarrel with Lewis of Bavaria, and the chief aim of the conditions imposed upon the prostrate Emperor was to secure a public acknowledgment of the subjection of the Empire to the Holy See. Nor were the claims of the Popes confined to the Empire, where a long quarrel might well have led to exaggerated demands. The secular lordship, which even in the eleventh century they had asserted over Spain, Corsica and Hungary, was now extended over a great part of Europe.<sup>1</sup> However shadowy their authority in these lands might be, the claim challenged criticism, and criticism had not been refused. The study of the Civil law had raised up a body of lawyers, who in scholarship and self-confidence held no unequal rivalry with the theologians. While Lewis of Bavaria was struggling with the Pope, a band of publicists, Marsilio of Padua, John of Jaudun, and William of Ockham, had maintained boldly and aggressively the divine origin and the independence of secular government. They found the Pope pretending to an authority over all Christians which, spiritual in its source and defended on spiritual grounds, was in practice constantly extended to worldly matters; and in reply they marked out jealously the limits of the spiritual power, they declared that lay rule was not only independent but also supreme in its own province, and that the property and persons of the clergy ought to be subject to its laws.

To these men, who wrote as avowed defenders of the Empire, the Emperor was the head and source of all secular government, and to him in their system accrued all the rights which they strove to wrest from ecclesiastical hands. But the Emperor was ill-fitted to bear the honour they laid upon him. He exercised only a nominal supremacy and that within comparatively narrow limits; while in a country that, like England, had

<sup>1</sup> On this point see Milman's *Latin Christianity*, B. xi. c. 7 (vol. vii. p. 13 of the 3rd edition). See also Dr. C. Höfler's *Die Avignonesischen Päpste* (Vienna, 1871) where it is strongly brought out.

never acknowledged subjection to him, discussions as to the translation of the Empire from East to West were futile. Yet some one must take his place; if not as the guardian of the world's peace, at least as the chief lord from whom all property must be held. Fitzralph,<sup>1</sup> if none before him, cut the knot by maintaining that God himself was the chief lord of all possessions, from Him every man held as far as any true rights of ownership were concerned, and to Him must do service. If he failed in this service, that is, if he fell into mortal sin, he forfeited his rights.<sup>2</sup> This is the doctrine of Dominion which Wyclif upheld, and which he is sometimes believed to have invented. Once received, it cuts short the old quarrel between Pope and Emperor, since it does away with the need of either as a fountain of secular authority. All rulers and owners hold direct from God as their *dominus capitalis*, who has delegated his powers to no vicegerent.

I have sketched the growth of this theory because it is only thus that we can see the object of those who first developed it. Whatever use the weapon might be put to later, it was forged to defend lay authority against the Pope. But it does not need much consideration to discover that, stated baldly, it might be employed to dangerous ends. When Wyclif says: "For he that standeth in grace is very lord of things, and whoever faileth by default of grace, he faileth right title of the thing that he occupieth and unableth himself to have the gifts of God,"<sup>3</sup> his language easily lends itself to the malicious gloss of Rohrbacher: "Comme les partisans de Wiclif se donnaient pour des saints, et leurs adversaires pour des méchants, l'application était facile." Wyclif and his true disciples drew no such

<sup>1</sup> Richard Fitzralph, Archbishop of Armagh. Wyclif looked up to him as a teacher, and often speaks of him with respect (see *Trialogus*, pp. 168 and 286). In the tract on Clerks Possessioners, p. 128 of this volume, he is called St. Richard, but I need hardly say that he never received the honours of formal canonization.

<sup>2</sup> *Omnis inobediens justis imperiis domini sui, in his quæ contingunt domini sui debitam servitutem, jus perdit omnium pro debito servitio a suo domino impensorum, et in illa forefacit: sed homo recepit dominium a deo pro præstando sibi debito obsequio: ergo inobediendo justis imperiis dei, mortaliter peccando, perdit dominium a deo sibi impensum, et forefacit illud.* Quoted from Fitzralph by Woodford, in his treatise against Wyclif (*Brown's Fasciculus Rerum Expetendarum*, i. 237).

<sup>3</sup> S. E. W. iii. 88.

conclusion from it. In the first place, as Dr. Shirley has pointed out,<sup>1</sup> he does not look upon dominion as a power, but as a habit or relation of the natural man. "There are," he says, "two titles by which a man holds temporal goods; the title of original justice and that of earthly justice. By the title of original justice Christ possessed all worldly goods, as Augustine often says; by that title—the title of grace—all things belong to the just; but civil possession has little to do with that title. Wherefore Christ and his disciples despised civil rule and possession, and contented themselves with holding only according to the first title."<sup>2</sup> Here we see that Wyclif brings civil possession into contrast with true dominion. It is with the latter, as an ideal, that he meets the ideal which ascribes to the Pope, as God's vicar on earth, the right of control over all earthly things, secular as well as spiritual.

From another side the doctrine had an ethical attraction for him, since it gave to the owner of property a higher sanction and motive for action than he could draw from merely human law. Thus he remarks that the King's right to rule does not allow him to follow only his own pleasure, since he is bound to observe the law of his chief lord, to the profit and advancement of his kingdom.<sup>3</sup> In the artificial constitution of society in the fourteenth century no tie was reckoned as more binding than that of the feudal tenant to his lord. The doctrine of Dominion set up a similar obligation to God.<sup>4</sup>

We see then the main drift of the doctrine and its value to Wyclif. It cut at the root of the Pope's usurped power and gave to the layman freedom with increased responsibility. "But," it may be asked, "did not Wyclif go on to draw from it other and harmful corollaries when, after the full development

<sup>1</sup> F. Z. lxiii.

<sup>2</sup> Trial. iv. 17, p. 306.

<sup>3</sup> Sed revera de rege, ut procuratore citra Christum, non sequitur: ipse dominatur hiis temporalibus, ergo licet sibi consumere ipsa quomodocumque voluerit: quia cum sit vere (?) peccabilis, habens super se capitalem dominum, oportet quod observet in expendendo sua temporalia legem capitalis domini ad augmentum et commodum regni sui, ut patet ex lege humana.—De Mandatis, cap. 25, MS. Univ. Camb. Ll. 5, 13.

<sup>4</sup> Dicitur quod ratione sui proprii et veri domini verum est quod [Deus] non eget nostro servicio, sed nos econtra egemus ut serviamus pro habendo suo dominio.—Early Sermons, No. 19, MS. Lambeth.

of his opinions, he found Church and State united against him? When he appealed to the people in his tracts, did he not hold out to his followers the bait of a temporal reign of the saints?" He neither did nor could. Beside the distinction which, as we have seen, carried his theory into the ideal region, he put a practical obstacle in the way of those "too hasty heads for ordering worlds" who might have tried to make an ill use of it. While he taught that the man in mortal sin forfeited his dominion, he also taught that no one could tell what sin was mortal. For he did not, like the Roman Casuists, divide sin into the categories of mortal and venial according to the nature of each act; for him the only mortal sin was that of which the sinner was finally impenitent. The predestinate cannot sin thus; the reprobate (or, as he prefers to call them, the fore-known) will do so. But since his doctrine of predestination is not supplemented by one of assurance there can be no separation of sheep and goats in this life, where no man can know even what is his own state; much less what is that of others. "If the pope asked me," he says, "whether I were ordained to be saved or predestinate, I would say that I hoped so, but I would not swear it, nor affirm it without condition, though he greatly punished me; nor deny it, nor doubt it, would I no way."<sup>1</sup>

Those who know how thoroughly Wyclif's doctrines are interwoven so as to form a consistent whole will see that there was no fear of his using this theory of dominion as a dangerous solvent of society, but we are not left to mere inference in this matter. Wyclif constantly asserted the duty of obedience even to wicked rulers, and it is curious that one paradoxical phrase in which he expressed this truth was brought against him as a heresy. "Item quod Deus debet obedire diabolo" was the seventh proposition condemned in the Council of London. The words sound strangely and are marked by the exaggeration of the Schools; but if we take obedience to mean the rendering of fit service, we shall see that it is only an emphatic way of saying that we must give to every one his due.<sup>2</sup> So Christ ministered

<sup>1</sup> S. E. W. iii. 426.

<sup>2</sup> See S. E. W. iii. 437.



to Iscariot, when he was a devil, and he submitted himself to Satan to be tempted. It follows that the Christian must subject himself to those who by God's ordinance and allowance are placed over him.

If we turn from principles to the manner in which Wyclif enforced them we shall find him perfectly consistent. So far as my knowledge of his works goes, there is only one passage which is open to misinterpretation on this point. It occurs in a sermon on the parable of the talents. "If thou ask who shall take away goods from these unjust men, since they be commonly mighty and no man dare take from them, Christ answers here and may not lie; this just man to whom God giveth heaven taketh from this unjust man that that him seemeth to have; and not by his own authority, nor by strength of himself, but by authority of God and by virtue of his law."<sup>1</sup> Taken by itself this quotation might seem to justify the good in depriving the wicked, but on reference to the context it is clear that Wyclif is insisting upon the ideal or spiritual possession, since he goes on to say: "And some men that shall be safe although they seem now poor, nevertheless they have now heaven and all goods of this world; but this having is now hid and yet unknown to man; for God's right is not yet put in possession."

The theory of Dominion is developed most in the Latin works, and finds little place in the popular tracts, but the latter contain many assertions of the duty of obedience to wicked men. I will content myself with one quotation, which is specially directed against those who misused the doctrine of Dominion. "But yet men doubt commonly whether men should pay their debts to these men that they know live in wicked life. And it seems nay, by reason of God, for such men ben unworthy to have any goods; yea to have life given of their God; how be they worthy to receive their debts? since they have lost title of all rightfulness. But here men think by God's law that men should stir such shrews to serve truly their God both by word and deed, and pay them their debts and hope for their

<sup>1</sup> S. E. W. i. 260.

amendment. For as God wills that they live, so he wills that men give (*i.e.* pay) them. And therefore teaches St. Paul, that Christian men that be servants serve well their heathen lords, by reason of their God. And so we grant well that such receive unjustly and to their damnation debts that men pay them, and yet their debtors meritoriously give these goods."<sup>1</sup> The latter part of this passage sums up very shortly Wyclif's belief. The wicked receive wrongfully, yet it is right we should yield them their worldly dues. The question of forfeiture is one to be settled with their chief lord, God, who will exact a strict account, and we have nothing to do with it.

I now pass to another characteristic doctrine of the Reformer, the sinfulness of endowments for the clergy. This, although distinct from the theory of Dominion, was closely connected with it. God, from whom all earthly lordship is derived, gives it all in fee to lay rulers and forbids the clergy to have any share in it. Wyclif appealed to the precedent of the Jewish law by which the priests were to have no inheritance in the land, and urged the example of Christ and his apostles who lived in voluntary poverty. It is a favourite saying of his, borrowed from Augustine, that as lay lords represent the Godhead of Christ in exercising the power which he has entrusted to them, so priests represent his manhood and are bound to follow his humility. There was nothing new in this, since it had been maintained long before by the imperialist writers. Moreover it was only a consistent application of ideas which were dominant throughout Christendom. The Church did not insist on poverty in her ministers, but accounted it a note of the higher life, a part of the vow of every regular. The monk's rule allowed him nothing of his own,<sup>2</sup> the friar was for-

<sup>1</sup> S. E. W. iii. 175. See too the tract on Servants and Lords in this volume, especially p. 229, also S. E. W. iii. 147, "Moreover it were to wit, etc." Among the Latin works where the duty is enforced may be mentioned the *De Sex Jugis*, printed in Dr. Lechler's Appendix (ii. 601). This deserves notice because it is a tract compiled as an instruction to the poor priests.

<sup>2</sup> *Precipue hoc vitium peculiare radicatus amputandum est de monasteriis, ne quis presumat aliquid dare aut accipere sine iussione abbatis, neque aliquid habere proprium, nullam omnino rem, neque codicem, neque tabulas, neque graphium, sed nihil omnino.*—Rule of St. Benedict, xxxiii.

bidden a share even in corporate possession.<sup>1</sup> Wyclif would acknowledge no select higher life. Christ's rule was binding and was better than any that men could lay down, and since he taught poverty both by precept and example, the clergy was bound to follow his bidding and live on the free-will offerings of the people. In short Wyclif advocated a purely voluntary system, denouncing not merely state subsidies but all endowments. Like Dante<sup>2</sup> he traced the ills of the Church to the donation of Constantine, which Sylvester had sinned in accepting and which had since spread corruption through Christendom. The laity, who have sinned in heaping these fatal gifts upon the Church, are bound to withdraw them by wise and gradual means.<sup>3</sup> The support appointed by God for the clergy is the tithe, and the payment of it is a duty so binding that it may be enforced by excommunication, always on the condition that the discipline is exercised for the good of the sinner and not for the greed of the priest. On the other hand if the pastor fails in his service, his flock should punish him by withdrawal of tithes, but this may only be done by orderly consent of the parishioners and not by individual caprice.

I can safely leave to others the task of criticizing Wyclif's plan for enforcing "wilful povert," but I may be allowed to remark that on this subject there was much excuse for extravagance. The wealth of the Church was the occasion, if not the cause, of such scandals as we now find it hard to imagine. Pluralists who held benefices by the hundred, Popes who sold their patronage openly, and prelates who knew nothing of their offices but their net yield, were the rulers of the Church.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Rule and Testament of St. Francis (below, pp. 42 and 46).

<sup>2</sup> Inf. xix. 115. Par. xx. 55.

<sup>3</sup> Wyclif's scheme, which provides some protection for vested interests, is to be found in the Trialogus, iv. 19 (p. 313).

<sup>4</sup> See Nicolaus de Clamengius, *De corrupto Ecclesie Statu* in Brown's Fasciculus Rerum Expetendarum, vol. ii. p. 555, etc. Here is his account of the pluralism of the Cardinals: "Quantas illud aviditatis est, quod tantam multitudinem beneficiorum invicem repugnantium tenent? quod Monachi simul et Canonici sunt regulares et seculares? quod sub eodem habitu omnium religionum, ordinum, professionum, jura et officia beneficiaque possident. Non quidem duo vel tria, decem vel viginti, sed centena et ducentena, et interdum usque ad quadringenta vel quingenta aut amplius: Nec parva vel tenuia sed omnium pinguisima et optima," etc. (p. 559). In another place he says that no one nowadays in taking a cure of souls inquires into anything

What wonder if an earnest reformer longed to clear away the riches which seemed to be choking all spiritual life? I do not wish however to defend Wyclif's views but to explain them, and I am only trying to show that he does not step beyond the reasonable bounds of ecclesiastical politics. It is only by disingenuous devices of controversy that his advocacy of disendowment has been confused with his theories as to Dominion in order to represent him as a socialist and a leveller.<sup>1</sup>

I have dwelt at some length upon these questions relating to property, because until they have been studied it is impossible to understand Wyclif's real position. Had his teaching been as dangerous and subversive as some writers represent it, we cannot suppose that he would have found favour and support with the statesmen of his time, and that not merely with one or two prominent men or at one particular crisis, but during twenty years of active life. Paradoxical as it may seem, I venture to say that one of Wyclif's most marked characteristics is his essential moderation. Even when his language is most vehement the thought and purpose beneath it are sane and reasonable. He indulges himself in heaping charges upon the prelates or friars who are for the moment the objects of his invective; they are spiritual manslaughterers, they are necromancers, they are ghostly adulterers and Sodomites; and as each fresh sin is added to the list, the accusation is justified with more or less logical ingenuity. These "ornaments to debate" are partly due to habits of paradox acquired in the Schools, and partly they are outlets for his fervid indignation. But if we go down to the kernel of thought, we find no wildness. Whether the question in hand be one of doctrine or discipline, Wyclif has considered it carefully both in principle and in its practical bearings. It is this characteristic that entitles him to his

but the amount of the income: "*Nec vero tantopere queritur, quanti sit presentis homini et in Ecclesia rite servienti valor beneficii, quam quid suo possessori longius otia agentis, et perpetuo fortassis abfuturo, annuo proventu reddere valet.*" (p. 556). De Clamengis, it must be remembered, lies under no suspicion of heretical leanings. He was one of the many good men who lamented the abuses of the Church, but lacked courage to take part in any real reform.

<sup>1</sup> On the difference between endowments and lay property, see the tract *On Servants and Lords*, p. 229.

eminence as the first of the Reformers. Long before his time there had been heated sectaries who had denounced the whole system of the Church, but Wyclif was the first to submit it to a searching proof, to examine the prevalent practices and ask how it was they bent away from the ideal at which they ought to aim. In his conclusions he forestalled in many points the judgments of the more moderate reformers of the sixteenth century.

The note of a fanatic is that he cannot see that there is some soul of goodness in things evil; the institution or person that offends him is bad and must be swept away, and he would think it waste of time to inquire what accidental good it may do or to what use it was originally designed. Now it is a favourite practice of Wyclif to look back to the origin of the practice that he is discussing, and even in the act of condemnation he is ready to recognize occasional merits. Take for example this account of the ordinance of confession: "This confession that is made to man hath oft-times been varied in varying of the Church. For first men confessed to God and to the common people, and this confession was used in the time of the apostles. Afterwards men were confessed more specially to priests and made them judges and counsellors of their sinful life. But in the third time, since the fiend was loosed, Pope Innocent ordained a law of confession that each man of discretion should once in the year be privily confessed of his own priest, and added much to this law that he could not ground. And although this Pope's ordinance do much good to many men, nevertheless many men think that it harmeth the Church."<sup>1</sup> It is not enough to say that this passage is not fanatical; it shows a temper which is fundamentally opposed to fanaticism, and this is the more noticeable because it comes from a tract of late date and vehement tone. Again, on the subject of image-

<sup>1</sup> S. E. W. iii. 255. This is from a tract written about 1382. Compare the following passage "*Nam quacunq[ue] hora quis peccaverit debet conteri, et in tantum quo sibi proderit . . . habita sacerdotum copia confiteri*" (Early Sermons, No. I. MS. Lambeth). I give this passage, written when his views were less advanced, as showing the same principle and the same temper of setting the spiritual advantages above the formal rule.

worship and the adoration of saints, Wyclif, while opposing himself to the prevalent uses of the Church, spoke with reason and moderation. He denounced the waste of treasure on "dead stocks,"<sup>1</sup> but allowed that images were not forbidden to Christians, who may use them to excite devotion, and must always be careful not to adore the sign in place of the thing signified. If devotion is once paid to the image itself, or miraculous powers are attributed to it, it becomes an evil instead of a benefit, and thus the setting of one image above another is an act of idolatry.<sup>2</sup> Here we see how he tries to find a principle to judge by, and does not content himself with vague invective.

In treating of the adoration of saints, he shows the same spirit. No devotions to saints, he says, can be of any avail except so far as they honour Christ or excite men to love him, and since all gifts can be obtained only through his mediation, it seems to many that it would be better to pray directly to him.<sup>3</sup> In accordance with this, we may notice that in the tract on the Ave Maria printed in this volume there is nothing said of invoking the help of the Virgin, although her example is insisted on, as might be expected from one who believed her to be sinless. Yet although he thus prefers prayer to Christ, he can scarcely be said to discourage those who find devotion to the saints profitable; but there is no indecision in his language as to the abuses which clustered round the worship of the saints; the treasure wasted on their shrines, the time thrown away on pilgrimage, the superstitious regard for relics.<sup>4</sup> Most likely it was

<sup>1</sup> Below, pages 7 and 210.

<sup>2</sup> Et sic uni ymagini plus affecti quam alteri adorant ymagines, quod indubie est idolatria.—De Mandatis Divinis, cap. 16, MS. Univ. Camb. Ll. 5. 13.

<sup>3</sup> Trial. iii. 30 (p. 236). So too in the *Dialogus*, c. 14: Et videtur multis nulla oratio porrecta specialiter sancto Christi est laudabilis, nisi de quanto acuit devocionem in Christum, sic quod si omnes intenciones et omnes oraciones uniri possent in Christum, . . . esset utilis Christiano omnes oraciones specialiter Christo porrigere.—MS. Ashburnham, lf. 104b.

<sup>4</sup> It is to be noticed that even while he still upheld prayers to the saints, his views on these matters were decided. In a sermon preached at St. Mary's, Oxford, on the festival of the Assumption, in which he says that all human beings need to ask Mary's aid, he supposes that God may have removed her body, like those of Moses and St. John, to prevent the harm which would have come from worshipping it.—Early Sermons, XXVI. MS. Lambeth.

indignation against these abuses that led him to question the doctrines on which they depended.

These examples are enough to show Wyclif's temper and method, and it would be tedious and unprofitable to discuss in detail every point on which he differed from the dominant opinion of his time. Everywhere we find the same habit of judging forms and rites by their tendency to promote moral and spiritual aims; and since the Church of his time had become a mass of formalism, it was inevitable that he should find himself in opposition to its most cherished practices.

There remains yet one matter which I cannot pass over; Wyclif's opposition to the friars. Until lately it was supposed that his first public action was in opposition to the mendicant orders, that he threw himself into the lists against them at Oxford in succession to Fitzralph. Dr. Shirley first showed this to be an error, and Dr. Lechler has given quotations from some of Wyclif's earlier works which express respect for the friars, as following the life of poverty incumbent on all priests.<sup>1</sup> If we could rely on the authority of his antagonist Woodford, we should believe that it was only the opposition of the friars to his doctrine of the Eucharist which led him to attack them. This view has been accepted by Dr. Lechler, who dates Wyclif's first assault upon the friars in 1381, and thus throws the whole of the controversy with the Mendicants into the last three years of his life.<sup>2</sup> There is considerable authority for this view. Besides the statement of Woodford we have the information from a contemporary chronicler that in 1377 Wyclif, in disputing at Oxford against the possessions of the clergy, gave much praise to the Franciscan rule.<sup>3</sup> In spite of this I cannot put the beginning of the quarrel so late. To go no further than the present volume, the tract *De Officio Pastoralis*, as I have shown in the head-note, is not later than 1378, and yet the friars are attacked in it without mercy. The use of the cant phrase

<sup>1</sup> Lechler, i. 586.

<sup>2</sup> In the English translation Dr. Lechler modifies this statement slightly. He says: "From 1378 we date a period of a few years in which Wyclif began to attack the Mendicants upon single points of error and abuse."—Vol. ii. 143.

<sup>3</sup> *Eulogium Historiarum* (continuation), p. 345.

"cayms castels" for the friars' houses is enough to show that the quarrel was already bitter.<sup>1</sup> We must not assume that any tract which does not refer to Wyclif's sacramental doctrine was written before that doctrine was developed, but it is safe to say that, if the strife between him and the friars had been first or chiefly aroused by the Eucharistic controversy, it would have been mentioned in any long tract specially directed against them, yet we find no notice of it in the *De Pseudofreriis* (our No. XXII.). The same is the case in some of the Latin tracts<sup>2</sup> while in one, the *De Contrarietate Duorum Dominorum*,<sup>3</sup> there is a very marked instance, since in the course of a fierce attack upon the friars Wyclif gives a list of seven heresies of which they are guilty, in which there occurs no mention of the Host. These considerations support the view which I have already expressed on other grounds,<sup>4</sup> that at the time when Wyclif first declared his heresy as to the Sacrament he was in the thick of a controversy with the friars. I may add that the antagonism is not disproved by showing that Wyclif spoke with respect of the founders of the Mendicant orders. As we may see by the tract on the Rule of St. Francis (our No. III.), while he objected to all separate orders, what made him most wrathful with the friars was that they professed the poverty which was his own ideal but were untrue to their rule; nor is there any reasonable doubt that there were scandals enough among them to account for his hostility. If I may trust the impression made by reading a great deal of his invective, I should say that the abuses which most stirred his wrath were those connected with the various forms of indulgence and absolution; the sale of pardons and letters of fraternity, the offer of special prayers, and the claims of holiness for all admitted to the habit, even in the death agony. When and how his earlier good opinion was changed into dislike can only be a matter of conjecture, but such an effect may well

<sup>1</sup> This is found also in the Latin version of the tract, which Dr. Lechler assigns to 1378.

<sup>2</sup> e.g. *De Servitute Civili* (Shirley, 68) and *de Nova Prevaricantia Mandatorum*. (Shirley, 79).

<sup>3</sup> No. 83 in Shirley's Catalogue.

<sup>4</sup> See above, p. xxv.



have been produced by his experience as a parish priest. Nothing can have been more trying to a parson who was doing his best to keep alive the flame of spiritual religion in his flock than the visit of one of these vagrant friars, preaching a catch-penny sermon, shriving men of sins which they were ashamed to confess to their own pastor, and generally encouraging the belief that a few easy benefactions to the convent would take the place of penitence and good life. I would not for a moment suggest that friars were always or even mostly of such a type, but very many such were to be seen in the villages. Jealousy once aroused was likely to be increased by the reports of Wyclif's poor priests, between whom and the friars there was a constant rivalry which often came to open quarrelling. If we take into account besides the permanent antagonism between regulars and seculars at the University, from the influence of which Wyclif can scarcely have escaped,<sup>1</sup> we shall find both public and personal causes enough to set him against the friars long before they led the attack on his sacramental doctrines.

We have now passed in review the most distinctive points in Wyclif's teaching, of which the main lines are clear even with our present materials, although many details cannot be settled until more of his Latin works are published. A natural curiosity leads us to turn from doctrines and opinions, and ask what the man was like. Portraits exist which are said to represent him, but of too recent a date to allow us to rely on their authenticity. From verbal description all we know is that he was thin and worn, and most innocent of conversation, and that he had a charm of manner which led men of the highest rank to delight in his society. Judging from his works it is rather difficult to discern in what the charm consisted. They are marked by learning and earnestness, and are occasionally relieved by touches of witty or humorous sarcasm, but they lack the strong personal stamp which wins our regard for Luther in spite of all his faults. Of Wyclif's own feelings, his inward struggles, his doubts and hesitations, we learn nothing; even

<sup>1</sup> We may trace it in his complaint that the friars monopolise books (pp. 128 and 221), which was made also by Fitzralph in his *Defensio Curatorum*.

when he tells us how he has changed an opinion it is in a quiet unimpassioned way as a simple relation of fact. Nor do we find in him what may be called the religious genius; the deep insight into spiritual things, the vivid sense of the invisible presences, which at times carries Luther, as it does St. Bernard or St. Theresa, into mystical rapture. Wyclif's piety is fervent and unfeigned, but never lifts him out of himself; his distinction is moral and intellectual—a moral energy which could not be satisfied with anything short of an ideal, fearless intellectual activity which proved all things, and shrank from no conclusions in an honest and devout search after truth. This preponderance of the intellectual and moral sides of his nature over the emotional accounts in some degree for the sense of hardness which we are conscious of in reading his works. When angered by a mischievous doctrine or an evil practice, he is apt to express and justify his indignation so freely that even his positive teaching seems to be tinged with polemic harshness. He was conscious of the defect, and tells us that he strove and prayed against it,<sup>1</sup> but it was to the end of his life too strong for him. Yet, whatever were his faults of temper, he must have possessed a singular attractiveness. No mere reputation for learning and intellect could have made him the adviser of the King, the companion of nobles, the head of a party at Oxford, and the adored leader of a band of faithful friends and disciples there and at Lutterworth. Not even the rancour of his enemies could impugn the blamelessness of his life, and the only sins they charged against him were pride of intellect and desire of distinction, accusations which no one can hope to escape who sets himself against the prevailing beliefs and customs of his time. He has however been blamed for cowardice by those who have accepted Knighton's very suspicious story of

<sup>1</sup> See a passage from the *De Veritate* quoted by Dr. Shirley, F. Z. xlv. Dr. Shirley speaks of 'a quick temper,' but what Wyclif acknowledges is that something of vindictiveness was apt to be mingled with his righteous anger. Another characteristic avowal is this: "*Omnes enim cogitamus superflue, quomodo vindicta caperetur de hostibus Christi atque ecclesie, et potius cogitamus imprecando istam vindictam quam alia media misericordie, que sic injuriantibus cederent ad salutem.*"—*De Sex Jugis*, Lechler (Appendix), ii. 603.

his recantation at Oxford.<sup>1</sup> Even apart from this he is said to have been shifty; speaking out his opinions vehemently and fully before his disciples and the crowd, denying, veiling, or minimizing them before authority. I do not think he is fairly open to censure on this point. No doubt, when put upon his trial, he explained away some of the charges brought against him. In his defence handed in to the Bishops in 1378 he says that some of the charges were founded on the reports of youths who had heard him lecture,<sup>2</sup> and even if the delators had by a singular chance been accurate, yet sentences detached from their context must sometimes have needed qualification. Yet any one who looks through his defence will see that in many cases he substantially upholds his original theses, and that so clearly that the Bishops would certainly have condemned him if they had been free to act. The pertinacity with which during the last years of his life he reiterated his most heterodox doctrines in all ways, in tracts and sermons as well as in formal treatises, shows that he did not shrink from braving the authorities of the Church. If we bear in mind how solitary he then was, without any party to encourage him by their applause or nerve him by their expectations, we shall wonder at his constancy rather than accuse him of faint-heartedness.

I need say little as to the character of the tracts which are printed here. In the short head-notes that I have prefixed to each I have tried to call attention to the salient points of interest, and to give my best judgment as to authenticity. I may however remark that while the book has been going through the press I have been permitted to use the volume of Latin Sermons in the Library of Trinity College, Cambridge, and have

<sup>1</sup> Höfler tries to back up the accusation by the following quotation from the tract *de Apostasia*: "Sed protestor publice in hiis scriptis quod si aliqua persona ecclesie, etiam Robertus Gibbonensis (the Antipope Clement VII.) vel aliquis de suis complicibus, et multo magis si papa noster Urbanus VI. vel alius Catholicus de sibi fideliter adhaerentibus docuerit aliquam partem hujus sententie esse falsam, volo paratissime revocare."—Anna von Luxemburg, p. 81. Höfler treats this as a profession of obedience, put on to shield himself from the charge of pertinacious heresy and leave a way open to recant. Was there ever a reformer or innovator who did not express his willingness to recant if any one would teach him better?

<sup>2</sup> "Et quia per pueros reportata est sententia fidei, quam dixi in scholis et alibi, ac magis, per pueros etiam usque ad Romanam curiam transportata," etc.—Wals. i. 357.

read the Latin tracts in the Ashburnham MS., and the result of this increased knowledge of Wyclif's unquestioned works is to make me lean more to the side of genuineness than when most of the head-notes were written. A critic must have much more faith in his verifying faculty than I possess if he can hope always to decide with certainty whether a given tract was written by Wyclif or by one of his intimate associates, but I can safely affirm that the contents of this volume are Wyclifite if not Wyclif's; that they represent the views which he maintained, rarely if ever coloured by the exaggerations of the later and more violent Lollards.

It cannot be denied that there is a certain sameness which makes these tracts rather tiresome to read continuously. Yet any one who does so will be rewarded now and then by touches which depict, sometimes humorously, the manners of the time. The bad side of the friar is shown to us under many aspects; as a pardoner with stolen bulls and false relics (p. 154), as a pedlar carrying ornaments or pet dogs as presents to ladies who were sure to return his gifts with interest (p. 12), or, as he was more generally seen upon his rounds, accompanied by an "Iscaiot" into whose bag was poured the produce of his sturdy begging, while he evaded the rule which forbade him to touch coin by counting it with a stick or wearing gloves (p. 49); or, lastly, he is presented to us as an interloping preacher, crying down the parish priest and tickling the ears of the people in the hope of a good collection (pp. 443-445). Elsewhere we catch a glimpse of the frivolous crowd that hung about the great prelates (as about other noblemen), dressed in the most extravagant fashions of the day, and swearing curious and profane oaths unmeet for the ears of their patrons (p. 38). Or coming to the parish priests we may see by the vices of which they are accused—drunkenness, lewdness, and gambling—that the prevailing standard of morals among them was low, since otherwise such reproaches would have been absurd and ineffective. It may perhaps be well to add that we must not look here for a fair picture of friars or secular clergy. Men like Wyclif whose mission is to make the crooked straight;

preachers, reformers, prophets, do not supply us with an impartial sketch of manners. The evils against which they strive engross their attention, and we can no more trust to their delineations than to those of a satirist, yet they are full of instruction to one who knows how to read them with due allowance.<sup>1</sup>

Even on matters that are not ecclesiastical we have some notices of interest. The complaints of jury-packing (p 182), and perversion of justice (p 247), of extortionate taxation and seizure of goods in exchange for worthless tally sticks, of serfdom enforced unjustly (pp. 233, 234); all these show us how the weak had to suffer, and how much food was daily given to that fire of indignation which after long smouldering broke forth in the wild rebellion of the peasants.

I have yet to say a few words as to the purpose and plan of this volume. My object has been to complete the publication of Wyclif's English works. With this view I have printed all the tracts enumerated in Dr. Shirley's Catalogue that were omitted by Mr. Arnold, except when there is a strong balance of evidence against their authenticity. The exceptions are:—No 1. A collection of sermons ascribed to Wyclif only by a guess of Dr. Vaughan; <sup>2</sup> Nos 6-9. Commentaries on the Gospels and the Apocalypse, which are by a later writer; <sup>3</sup> No. 11, parts 1 and 7, which are shown by Mr. Arnold to be by another author.<sup>4</sup> With regard to No. 48, I think, with Mr. Arnold, that it is not Wyclif's, and I have left it out with less hesitation since it has been printed by Dr. Todd.<sup>5</sup>

Of the pieces that are printed here, "De Officio Pastoralis" and "De Papa" (Shirley 61 and 62) are undoubtedly genuine, but were out of Mr. Arnold's reach at the time his book was brought out. The rest of the volume consists of his leavings. On questions

<sup>1</sup> I am setting down truisms, but Mr. Arnold is so severe upon Wyclif for his one-sidedness that I feel bound to apologize lest I incur the same condemnation.—S. E. W. iii. ix.

<sup>2</sup> See note in Shirley's Catalogue and S. E. W. i. p. iii.

<sup>3</sup> S. E. W. i. p. iv. and Lechler, i. 440 (l. 334 English edition).

<sup>4</sup> S. E. W. iii. p. vi. There are bits inserted, which may probably be by Wyclif. The piece will be edited for this Society by Canon Simmons among his Lay Folks' Catechisms.

<sup>5</sup> Three treatises by John Wycklyffe, D.D., Dublin 1861.

of genuineness and interest, which have to be determined by internal evidence, it is impossible that any two students should be exactly in accord, and it is not for me to complain that the gleanings left for me are scarcely less worth than the harvest which Mr. Arnold gathered. Some of these tracts, *e.g.* "On Feigned Contemplative Life" (No. X.), and "On Servants and Lords" (No. XV.), seem to me to be above the average even of his third volume in interest.

As to the method pursued in editing, several tracts are from unique copies, and required only careful transcription and correction of the press. Where two or more MSS. gave me the opportunity of collation, I have not attempted to note mere differences of spelling, lest I should encumber the page with footnotes and references to an intolerable degree. Whenever it was possible I have kept the reading of the MS. which has served as groundwork, giving the alternatives in the note, and have corrected the text only where I thought there could be no doubt it was faulty. I have given in the margin the references for texts quoted by Wyclif,<sup>1</sup> but I have not tried to trace home his many quotations from the Fathers, etc.

In the notes I have adduced some parallel passages from the Latin works. It would have been easy to add many from the English sermons and tracts already published; but as my object was to show the resemblance of the text to Wyclif's authentic writings, I have drawn by preference from the Latin, as their genuineness is unquestionable. An additional motive for this course is that the Latin works are for the most part less readily available than the English, and for a similar reason I have taken as much as possible from MSS., in the hope that if my quotations should not seem to the point, their insertion may be excused by their intrinsic interest.

I must not omit to acknowledge the kindness which has made my work possible. For the loan of MSS. I have to thank His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Provost and Fellows of Trinity College, Dublin, and the Right Hon. the Earl of

<sup>1</sup> When the verse number is in brackets, *e.g.* Luke x. [7], the reference to the chapter is given in the MS.

Ashburnham. The use of the Ashburnham MS. has been doubly valuable to me, both as enabling me to add two important and authentic tracts, and as giving me an opportunity of studying the Latin tracts contained in it, many of them unique. The strict regulations binding on the Library of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, do not allow of the loan of MSS., but I have much reason to be grateful to Mr. Lewis, the Librarian, for affording the utmost facility in the use of the MS. from which most of the tracts in this volume are copied.

I have also to thank Professor Atkinson of Trinity College, Dublin, and Mr. S. J. Herbage for generous assistance, and especially my thanks are due to Mr. Furnivall, without whose encouragement my task would not have been undertaken, and whose ready helpfulness has been most useful to me throughout.





## CORRECTIONS.

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Page 8, l. 33	<i>for</i>	takis	<i>read</i>	talis.
P. 21, l. 1	„	wtt̃h	„	with.
P. 22, l. 19	„	pat	„	pat.
P. 30, l. 14	„	pritti	„	pritti.
P. 46, l. 25	„	pertyneþ	„	pertyneþ.
P. 80, l. 19	„	pouþ	„	pouþ.
P. 129, l. 1	„	leuyng	„	lenyng.
P. 218, l. 11, margin	„	Eccles	„	Eccelus.
P. 224, l. 28	„	part	„	part.
P. 286, margin	„	Jod x. 9	„	Job x. 4.
P. 334, l. 5	„	disceyeud	„	disceyued.

P. 350, l. 13, *dele* full stop *after* hope.

P. 400, l. 8, *insert* comma *after* vermis.

P. 425, l. 33, *dele* full stop *after* dede.

P. 497. Note on *undren*. Canon Simmons has kindly sent me some quotations from "The Seven Canonical Hours of Prayer in the Anglo-Saxon Church," 1715, which show that undern originally meant *tierce*, however loosely it was used later. The word was growing antiquated in Wyclif's time. It occurs four times in the first version of the Bible, but is always omitted in the second.



# WYCLIF'S ENGLISH TRACTS.

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## I.

### OF THE LEAVEN OF PHARISEES.

WITH regard to this tract, as with many that follow, I can give no decided opinion as to authorship. I find it monotonous and poor in style, but in substance it contains nothing that may not be Wyclif's, while there is so much of his characteristic teaching that it must be by one of his intimate disciples if not by himself. The reference to Bishop Spencer's crusade (p. 8) shows that it was written about 1383. In some parts it very much resembles the *Fifty Heresies and Errors of Friars*, printed by Mr. Arnold, No. xxiv. Compare especially pp. 14, 15, with Chapter xvii. of the *Fifty Heresies* (S. E. W. III. 280).

There is a lively description in Chap. iii. of the tricks of the friars, which agrees well with Chaucer's description of his friar, whose

typet was aye farsed full of knyfes  
And pyennes for to give faire wyfes.

The touch about their making friends with women by giving them pet dogs (p. 12) is, so far as I know, peculiar to this tract.

Copied from the Corpus MS. X., and collated with the Dublin MS. AA.

#### SUMMARY.

- CHAP. I. Christ commands us to flee the leaven of Pharisees, who belonged to a singular religion. The Religious of these days are like them.
- II. Proofs of hypocrisy. Their pride, envy, persecution of true preachers, covetousness, self-indulgence, and unchastity.
- III. How they offend against each of the Ten Commandments.
- IV. How they do the contrary of the works of bodily mercy.
- V. How they do the contrary of the works of spiritual mercy.
- VI. How they fail in Faith, Hope, and Charity.
- VII. The duty of exposing their wickedness.
- VIII. Cowardice and falseness prevalent among all classes. Faults of priests.
- IX. Faults of Lords.
- X. Faults of Commons.
- XI. The faults of the Religious are much the worst.

Attendite a fermento phariseorum quod est ypocrisis  
Luca, 12°.

### Capitulum primum.

Christ's com-  
mand to flee  
the leaven of  
Pharisees,  
who were men of  
singular religion,  
and enemies to  
Christ,  
so that Christ  
called them  
hypocrites, and  
cursed them.  
Exceptions.  
Religious orders  
are like the  
Pharisees.  
They are not  
founded or sanc-  
tioned by Christ.  
Sufficiency of  
holy writ.  
They are under  
suspicion of hy-  
pocrisy.

Crist comandiþ to his disciplis and to alle cristene men to vndirstonde & flee þe sowrdow of pharisees, þe wiche is ypocrisie. First pharisees been men of synguler religioun founden of synful men, biside þe ordynaunce of god þat is tauþt in holi writ. And yn cristes tyme þere weren þre sectes of ordres founden of mannys ordinaunces, as pharisees, saduces and esseis. of two þe firste mathew spekeþ in his gospel. And of þe þridde spekeþ þe maister of stories. The firste two weren grete men of name and hauynge, and weren stronge enemyes to crist & his lawe, and disceyueden þe peple by ypocrisie, & weren ful coueitous. And þerfore Seint Joon baptist & crist clepede hem ypocritis & serpentis and addir kyndles, & jhu cursede hem ofte, þee eiþte tymes, as þe gospel seiþ. But crist louede & sauede summe gode men of hem, as nicodeme & poul, & brouþte hem out of her ordris to fredom of þe gospel & distroied þese ordris, as holi writ seiþ. And ȝif oure newe religious ben in þese same synnys, as ful of coueitise & ypocrisie, & stryuen aȝens þe fredom of þe gospel & cristis lif & his apostlis, þei ben cursid of god; and þei shullen be brouþt out of here ordris maad of synful men & brouþt clenly to þe gospel & fredom of cristis ordre, for it is most profit & most esi to wynne heuene by & most sikir, for þe most myȝt, most wisdom, & most charite of jhu crist þat made it and made nouȝt þise newe ordris. And ȝif þei hadden be needful or profitable he wolde haue maad hem by hym silf or by his apostelis, or teld in holi writ bi what man & what tyme þei shulden haue come in; but nouȝt of al þis is founden in holi writ, in wich is al nedful and profitable ordynaunce of holi chirche; & þerfore al þis nouelrie of ordris is suspect of ypocrisie & luciferis pride and blasfemye

of antecristis ypocrisie. last men doon þis nouelrie for vein glorie & for getyng more plentifousli of wordli godis bi abite & oþer sygnes of holinesse; siþþe þei myȝten lyue as plesandeli to god & as moche profit to holi chirche, and fulli ocupie al þe myȝtis boþe of soule & body be þat clene religioun þat crist made hym self to his disciplis & prestis as bi þese nouelries maad of ydiotis & synful wrecchis of lucifers pride; for þei ben taken as holier men & holden hem self more worþi for þise newe ordinaunces of her owen fonnyd heuedis, þat letten hem from þe better ocupacioun,<sup>1</sup> \*þan for clenness of cristis ordre, þouȝ þei seruen<sup>2</sup> neuere so perfittly crist in holy lyuyng and trewe techyng wiþoute þis newe professioun and cermonyes, þe whiche crist and his apostlis diden neuere ne tauȝten in al holy writ. It is a fendis pride a synful creature to putte defaultte in þe ordynaunce of crist, seiynge in word or dede þat crist tauȝte not his disciplis and his prestes þe beste ordre and religioun, but lefte þe beste ordre bihynde a þousand þeer and more til sathanas was vnbounden to desceyue men bi lesyngis and ypocrisie, and siþen crist made and tauȝte þe beste religioun, it is a stynkyng pride of luciferis children to leue þe betre, and constreyne men to leue þe betere, and take and nede men to holde forþe þe worse. Of blasphemye, for þes newe religious seyn in word or dede þat crist myȝt not, coude not,<sup>3</sup> or wolde not teche cristen men þe beste religion to wynnene heuene by; and ȝif þis be soþ crist was not god, for þanne he was oute of charite. And in þis same þei seyn priueily þat a synful ydiot was more<sup>4</sup> wis and fullere of charite þan ihu crist, siþ bi hem þis synful ydiot ȝaf and vsed a betere religioun þan euere dide crist god almyȝty. ypocrisie is a fals feynyng of holynes whan it is not in trewþe bifore god, and so ypocrisie is fully contrarie to crist, þat is trewþe as þe gospel techeþ, and it is comunly þe moste perylous synne of alle. For comunly an ypocrite doþ neuere verrey penaunce, for trist þat he has

They pride themselves more on keeping their ceremonies than on serving Christ.  
\*[p. 2 MS. Corp.]

They imply that Christ's teaching was defective,

and thus that he was not God.

Hypocrisy most opposite to Christ, who is truth.

<sup>1</sup> Up to this point is copied from AA, as the text in X is illegible from damp.

<sup>2</sup> suwen AA.

<sup>3</sup> omitted X.

<sup>4</sup> omitted X.

Hypocrites the  
worst thieves.

in his owen holy feyned lif and for likyng of veyne glorie and for wynnyng of worldly goodis; and ypocritis ben most cursed before al oþer þeues, for þei ben þeues of goodis of grace and dysceyuen oþer men in goodis of vertu, þat ben betere þan goodis of fortune or goodis of kynde, and as a þing is betere so þe mysusyng þer-of is more dampnable, as lyncolne and oþer clerkis prouen; and þerfore crist in þe gospel cursid so ofte ypocritis more þan oþere synful men.

### Capitulum 2<sup>m</sup>.

Tests of hypo-  
crisy:

See now wheþer oure religious þis day ben ypocritis.

pride in worldly  
goods,

\*[p. 3 MS.]

þif þei bynden hem self bi herte, word and sygnes to moste mekenesse after crist and his apostelia, and þit ben most proude of worldly goodes, of beaute, of welschap, of strengþe of body, of connyng, of worldly and fleschly frenschipe, of kyn, and of holynesse \*of here singuler religion, þan ben þei moost cursed and synful ypocritis.

boasting of  
special holiness,

þif þei maken hem self in sizte of peple more holi<sup>1</sup> þan oþere men and bosten þereof in owtward signes or wordes, as mornynge abite, lettris of fraternite, þat crien here holynesse and synguler deuociouns bifor men, and bihynde ceesen of; and do þis for worldely wynnyng and veyn glorie, and preisen more here owen longe preieris þan oþer mennus,<sup>2</sup> þei ben þan foule ypocritis.

envy among  
themselves and  
hatred of true  
teachers,

¶ þif þei bynden hem to most charite and þer wiþ ben in gret enuye amongis hem self, and han dispitt and indignacion of good lyf and trewe techyng of cristis gospel þat symple men don out of here ordre, þes ben perilous ypocritis and cursed of god for defaute of charite.

delight in mis-  
chief done by  
others,

þif þei ben glad of here enemys myslyuyng or techynge, to lette þer-by men to teche freliche goddis lawe, þei ben cursed ypocritis.

þif þei bynden hem to most pacience and mercy and þer

<sup>1</sup> omitted X.

<sup>2</sup> The MS. contraction-mark is that for -us, though 'mannes' occurs on p. 30, l. 22, and in the first two sheets at least, all the other noun flexions, except this 'mennus' (or 'mannus') are in 'is,' 'ys' or 'es.'

wyþ haten and ben woode wroþ with men þat trewly dispisen synne and reþrouen here ypocrisie, and pursuen hem cruely and with out mercy þat frely and sadly techyn þe gospel and þe comaundements of god wherby here symonye and ypocrisie is more knowen of þe peple, þanne þei ben cruel ypocritis.

*persecution of those that preach the Gospel,*

ȝif þei pursuen trwe men for techyng of þe gospel, and seyn þere wiþ þat þei pursuen hem for errours þat þei seyn openly to þe peple when þei lien & falsly 'sclaundren trewe men, but þe pursuyt is maad for prestes techyng men where þei schullen do here almes to here moste nedy neiþbores after þe gospel; þan be þei cursed ypocritis.

¶ ȝif þei maken prelatis and lordis, bi here fals flateryng and lesyngis in confessions and preuei conseilis, to lette prestis to preche goddis lawe and to lette þe peple to knowe and to kepe þe comaundementis of god, lest freris ypocrisie and wynnyn[n]g be stoppid and þe peples almes betere spendid, þanne be þei cursed ypocritis.

*encouraging lords to stop preaching of the Gospel,*

¶ ȝif þei come in to þe chirche to holde and meyntene þe pouert of crist and his apostelis and bynden hem þer to, and þer with ben most coueitouse abouten worldely goodis, summe aboute temporal almes nedles and summe aboute worldely lordyschype, bi ypocrisie and lesyngis and flateryngs, þei ben þan trecherous ypocritis and perilous enemyes of crist and his chirche.

*covetousness under pretence of poverty,*

\*¶ ȝif þei maken profession to most hey pouert and to be deed to þe world and worldely þingis, and wiþ þis stryuen nyȝt and day who of hem may bilde gaiest wast housis and costly places, as chirchis or castelis to herberwen lordis ianne and ladyes, and beggen of pore men þer-to þat han nouȝt to lyuen by ne here children, þei ben perilous ypocritis and dysceyuen riche and poore.

*building of gay houses,*

ȝif þei ordeynen ydiotis to ben lymytours þat best kunnyng begge, and holde goode men and kunnyng in holy writt fro prechyng, and disceyuen men bi pardons, lettris of fraternite and priuat preieris for to geten worldely muk more þan soule helþe, þanne be þei fals ypocritis and worschipen false maummetis.

*deceiving men by pardons and letters of fraternity,*

¶ *ȝif þei bynden hem to traueile faste and techyng of þe gospel frely, as crist and his apostelis diden, and her-wiȝ ordeynen costly chambris and beddis and siluerene vessel and gay cloþes and costly mete and drink, as knyȝttis, barouns or erlis, and prœchyn<sup>1</sup> not but onys or þries in þe ȝeer before grete lordis and comuntees for veyn glorie or worldely wyunnyng, þei be þanne ypocritis at þe fulle.*

*ȝif þei traueilen faste in aristole<sup>2</sup> and newe sophymes to ben clepyd maistres, and þan traueilen not in holy writt but veyn pleies & corioustees, and excusen hem her-bi fro preiynge and rysynge at mydnyȝt, þei ben ypocritis; for þei don not goddis seruyce in hem selfe but drawn oþere men þer-fro.*

*ȝif þei bynden hem to grete penaunce and abstynence of mete and drynk and þer-of bosten to þe peple, and herewith seken lustys of costly metis and drynkis, and bien hem derrere þan lordis don, and dwellen in courtis with lordes and ladies to feden herȝ bely fast, and leuen herȝ deuociouns of cloistre, þei ben foul ypocritis, for þei maken herȝ stynkyng bely herȝ false god as seynt poule seiȝ.*

¶ *ȝif þei plesen lordes and ladies in synne and counforten hem to don extorcions to here pore tenauntes and to meyn-tene false causes for to haue lykyngis of herȝ foule wombe; þei ben wickid ypocritis and robberis of poore men and traitours to lordes and ladyes.*

¶ *ȝif þei bynde hem self to clene chastite boȝe of body and soule and of dede and wille, and herȝ-wiȝ don fornyacioun and auoutrie wiȝ wyues and nonnes, and slen wommen þat with-stonden \*hem in þis synne; þei ben foule ypocritis.*

¶ *ȝif þei don þe cursed synne of sodom wiȝ hem self, and seyn to nyse wymmen þat it is leese synne to trespase with hem þan with oþere weddid men, and vndir taken for þe synne of þe wommen, and norischen ryche men and wymmen in lecherie and in auoutrie for monye and to haue here owne lustis; þei ben cursid ypocritis and distroien cristendom.*

*It semeȝ þe deuyll gedreȝ siche lumpis of ȝonge men, fatte*

<sup>1</sup> omitted X.

<sup>2</sup> Aristotile AA.

luxury in houses,  
vessels and food,

neglect of  
preaching,

studying law  
instead of holy  
writ,

indulgence in  
rich food,

Phil. iii. 19.

encouraging  
lords in oppress-  
ing their tenants,

fornication and  
adultery,

\*[p. 5 MS.]

sodomy.

The devil brings  
together such  
'lumps' of



and lykyng and ydyl, and byndiþ hem fro wyues, þat men myȝten haue bi goddis lawe, to maken false heiris and to for-do þe kynde of men and so make þe erþe cursed of god and alle his seyntis. And þus þei ben ypocritis moſte dampnable bi-for god.

¶ ȝif þei seyn þat þei ben moſt holy and beſt men of religion, and þer wiþ lyuen iſt moſt pride, moſt enuye and wraþe, in moſt coueitise and ydilneſſe, in moſt glotone, dronkenneſſe, or ſurfet and leccherie.<sup>1</sup>

### Capitulum 3<sup>m</sup>.

See now where þei breken falſly alle þe comaundementis of god. ȝif þei cheſyn to be reulid more after þe ordynaunce of ſynful men and ydiotis þan after þe clene ordynaunce of criſt, and ſeyn þat ſynful mennus ordynaunce iſt betere and ſikerere for men and more perfit þan iſt þe clene ordynaunce of criſt; þei worſchipen falſe goddis and ben heretikys and blaſphemes; and ſo þei breken þe firſt maundement of god. ȝif þei dreden more and ponyschen more for brekyng of ſynful mennus contradicions þan for comaundementis of god curſedly broken, and ſtudien and louen more here priuat reulis þan þe heſtis of god, þei worſchepen, louen and dreden more ſynful men, and in caas dampnyd deuelis, þan god almyȝti. for as auſtyn ſeiþ a man makith þat þing hiſ god þe whiche he dredith moſt or loueþ moſt.

¶ ȝif þei chargen men more to ſeke blynde ſtockys or ymagis and to offere to hem more þan to pore bedrede men and more þan to charge goddis heſtis; þei worſchipen falſe goddis. for þou; a man breke goddis heſtis þei wole ſoone and liȝtly aſſoile him, but ȝif he make a vow to a blynd pylgrymage or to ſende hiſ offrynge to ſiche a ſtok; þat ſchal not be diſpenſid wiþ but reſerued to a grettere ſatrap. And in hiſ þei chargen more þe brekyng of a folie a-vow of ſynful men þan þe brekyng of goddis heſtis; but where is more ydolatrie? [p. 6 MS.]

<sup>1</sup> Probably there ſhould follow “þei ben curſid ypocritis,” unleſs the preceding clause iſt to be taken as part of the ſentence. But in both MSS. it iſt diſtinctly marked off.

II. They swear falsely to draw children to their order.

Letters of fraternity and indulgences for the crusade.

They undertake to get souls out of purgatory for money.

Luke vi. 46.

Matth. xv. 8.

Prov. xxviii. [9.]

Isaiah i. [15.]  
Mal. i. [10.]

III. They use the holiday to preach fables and to beg.

They draw people to church to admire the windows, etc., and not to repent.

¶ ȝif þei sweren in veyn and many false oþis to bigile ȝonge children to here veyn religion, sweryng þat it is þe beste; who takip þe name of god in more ydelnesse and more dispitt? ȝif þei taken þe charge to ben trewe vikeris or seruauntis of crist and þer-wiþ taken vpon hem falaly þat þinge þat is reserued to god only, as to make men partyners of here medeful dedis, and to graunte hem þe blisse of heuene and pardon to slee cristen men for to meyntene worldely lordschip and cōueitise of þat priest þat schulde be most make, most pore, most redy to dye for cristen mennus soulis; who takip more cursidly þe name of god in veyn?

¶ ȝif þei vndirtaken to brynge soules out of purgatorie bi here preiers and here to receyuen myche gold or rentis, and þer-wiþ lyuen in pride, enuye and oþere grete synnes; who takip more goddis name in veyn, and more cursidly disceyueþ cristen men? ¶ For crist seiþ to siche men in þe gospel of seynt luk: What seie ȝee to me lord! lord! and don not my comaundementis; and in þe gospel of matheu seiþ crist þat siche ypoocritis worschipen him wiþ outhen cause; and by salomons bok seiþ god þat his preiere is cursid and abhomynable þat turneþ a wey his eris þat he here not goddis lawe; and also bi þe prophete ysaie and malachie and austyn and gregory and many moo.

¶ ȝif þei maken hem besi on þe holy day to preche fablis and lesyngis to þe peple and not þe gospel, and gon fro place to place and fro man to man to begge of pore men for here false lesyngis, and letten men fro here deuocious; þei kepen not wel here holiday. ¶ ȝif þei drawen þe peple in þe holiday by coryouste of gaye wyndownes and colours and peyntyngis and babwynrie fro conpunccon of here synnes and fro mynde of heuenely þinges, and fede riche men wiþ pore mennus goodis, wiþ costly metis and wynes and wast spicerie to glotonye, dronkenesse, lecherie, and weiward takis, and suffren pore men hungry and þristi and in gret mischef; þei kepen euyl here holyday and letten oþere men to kepen it. ¶ ȝif þei studien on þe holy day aboute experymentis or

wiche craft \*or 'veyn songis and<sup>1</sup> knackyng and harpyng, <sup>[p. 7 MS.]</sup>  
 gyternynge & daunsynge & oþere veyn triflis to geten þe <sup>They go to</sup>  
 stynkyng loue of damyselis, and stare hem to worldly <sup>dances to meet</sup>  
 vanyte and synnes; þei breken foule þer holyday and ben <sup>young women.</sup>  
 procuratours of þe fend.

¶ ȝif þei worschipen gretly here singuler patroun and dis- <sup>IV. They set</sup>  
 pisen god þe trynite and ihū crist oure goode fader, when <sup>their patrons</sup>  
 þei putten his lawe and his ordynauce bihynde; þei <sup>above their mo-</sup>  
 worschipen not here fadir after goodis lawe. ȝif þei louen <sup>ther, the Church.</sup>  
 more here singulere congregacion þan þe comynthe of cristen <sup>and their order</sup>  
 men, þei worschipen not but dispisen owre modire holy <sup>above God, who</sup>  
 chirche. ȝif þei drawen parischenes fro obedience and loue <sup>is their father,</sup>  
 & <sup>They draw away</sup> sacramentis of here gostely fadris for here owne wyunnyng, <sup>parishioners</sup>  
 as in confessioun and berynge & herynge<sup>3</sup> of massis for <sup>from their spi-</sup>  
 offryng; how worschipen þei and techen oþere to worchipe <sup>ritual father (the</sup>  
 here gostli fadris? ȝif þei drawen children fro fadir and <sup>curate).</sup>  
 modir and maken hem of here singulere religioun, þat þei <sup>They seduce</sup>  
 may not susteyne here heldris lif be þei neuor so feble and <sup>children from</sup>  
 pore; how worschipen þei god and techen childe to leue þe <sup>their parents to</sup>  
 maundement of god and to suffere fadire and modir to perische <sup>enter the orders.</sup>  
 for feyned obydience to synful mannes tradiciouns? certis  
 þis ilke fals religious is gilty of þeste and manquellyng  
 also, siþ he is cause of þe old pore mannes dep.

¶ ȝif þei haten and solaundren with false lesynges trewe men <sup>V. They hate,</sup>  
 to techen frely holy writt and repreuen synne, and namely <sup>slander, and per-</sup>  
 ypocrisie, and falsly pursuen hem to þe dep, þei slen hem, <sup>secute true</sup>  
 and ioon þe euangelist seiþ as to here dampnacion. ȝif þei <sup>preachers.</sup>  
 conforten men to slee here breþren in false werris, by open <sup>1 John III. 15.</sup>  
 prechyng or preuei conseilyng, or vndirtakyng for false <sup>They encourage</sup>  
 domesmen þat slen innocent men for coueityse or enmyte <sup>men to slay their</sup>  
 whanne men ȝeuen hem myche tresoure; þei ben false <sup>brethren in war.</sup>  
 menquelleris and most gyltif of alla.

¶ ȝif þei letten curatis and pore prestis to techen men goddis <sup>They hinder true</sup>  
 lawe bi sotil ypocrisie and sleightis of anticristis lawe, for <sup>preaching,</sup>

<sup>1</sup> omitted X.<sup>2</sup> omitted X.<sup>3</sup> omitted X.

and so commit soul-murder. drede lest here ypoocrisie be parceyned and here wynnynge and worldly fame leid a-down; þei ben cursed manquelleris, and gylti of dampnacion of alle þe soulis þat perischen for þe defeaute of kunnyng and kepyng of goddis comaundementis.

VI. They preach for praise and advantage, and so are ghostly adulterers.  
\*[p. 8 MS.]

¶ ȝif þei præchen principally for worldeli muk or veyn glorie, and so prechen here owne sotiltes to be praised of men, and not \*symply and pleyndly þe gospel of crist for his glorie and sauynge of mennus soulis; þei don gostely lecherie bi goddis word as poul seiþ.

They set philosophy above Holy Writ.

¶ ȝif þei seyn and meynntenen in scole and oþere placis þat þe wordis of holy writt ben false and manere of spekyng of newe idiotis is trewe, þei don gostly auoutrie and putten falsnesse and blasphemye vpon god; for in þat þei seyn þat an heþene filosofre or a newe synful caitif is wittiere and trewere þan almyȝti god, ȝe þat god is fals and a fole and þes heþene blasphemis and newe dremeris ben trewe and witti.

Under colour of phisic they commit adultery.

¶ ȝif þei feynen hem sotil of fisik and knowynge of wymmenys complexcion and preunte, seiynge þat siche siknesse or deþ schal com to hem in absence of here housbondis but ȝif þei haue mannus helpe, and þus defoulen on and oþer; þei breken foule þis comaundement þat biddiþ men do no lecherie; and in þis poynt men dreden þat þes pharisees geten hem moo holderis vp for here putrie þan for here trewe prechyng or holy lyf.

They visit wives when the husbands are away.

¶ Whanne lordis ben fro hom in werris, in iustis and parlementis and in dyuerse lordschipis, and whanne marchauntis ben out of lond or in fer custrees for here marchaundise, and whanne plowmen ben al day in þe feld at here plow; ore medes; þan þes pharisees presen faste to here wyues vnder colour of holynesse.

VII. They steal children to recruit their order.

¶ ȝif þei stelen mennus children, boþe gentyl mennus and pore, to make hem of here synguler ordre þat is maad of synful men and confermyd, & in cas of<sup>1</sup> deuelis and not of god; þei don cursed þefte aȝenst þe seu[n]þe maundement of

<sup>1</sup> omitted X.

god. for many men ben drawen, bi lesynges and ȝiftis and so by symonye, fro þe betere ordre to þe werse and maad more cursed and deppere dampnyd in helle. For þou; children ben brouȝt be lesyngis, symonye and fals bihestis in-to þis feyned ordre bifore tyme of discrecion and ben not able þer-to, ȝit þei schulle be nedid bi peyne of dampnyng in helle, as þei seyn, and bi drede of bodely deþ to holde forþ þis feyned religion aȝenst here conscience and fredom of þe gospel. and he þat most steliþ children to þes priuatis <sup>Wickedness and mischief of child stealing.</sup> ordris is most preised of þes cursed congregacion, and þat is a cursed reward. For he þat steliþ an oxe or a cowe is a þef and gretly \*peyned bi mannes lawe; myche more owiþ <sup>\*[p. 9 MS.]</sup> he to be ponyechid boþe of god and man þat steliþ his owne child, þat is betere þan alle worldely goodis; and here-bi ben gentil mennus heiris distroied, and so lordis and also laboreris and sumtyme trewe prestis and curatis ben made beggeris and lesyngmongeris to destruction of londis. ȝif þei techen wyues, prentis, *seruauntis* and children to stele <sup>They teach dependents to steal for their benefit.</sup> fro here housbondis, maistris and fadir and modir and ȝeuen it to þes pharisees, as hildegar seiþ, þei ben *perilous* þeuys <sup>Hildegar.</sup> to make discenciuous among manye. ȝif þei feynen hem nedý <sup>They feign poverty to get alms,</sup> and pore whanne þei ben ryche and proude, and beggen of þe pore peple, and maken men to wene þat þei schulden haue more þank of god to ȝeue here almes to riche possessioners or *oþer* ryche pharisees þan to ȝeuen it to here pore neiȝbores as crist biddiþ; þei ben foule þeuys, for þei robben þe almes <sup>and so rob the poor.</sup> ȝeuer boþe of feiþ, of worldely catel, and pore bedrede men of here liflode.

¶ ȝif þei putten on here pore breþren þat lyuen wel and <sup>VIII. They accuse true preachers of wishing to destroy religion,</sup> reprouen hem of here synnes þat þei wolden distroie holy religion, and here-fore disceisen hem and putten hem in prison, and sumtyme morþere hem aȝenst goddis lawe and þe kyngys; þei beren false wyttensse aȝenst here neiȝbore, and ben cursed manquelleris. ¶ ȝif þei beren on pore prestis þat techen þe trewþe of þe gospel and þe goodenesse of cristis ordynauce þat þei wolde distroie holi chirche, and here-fore <sup>and holy church.</sup>

They persecute  
friars who keep  
the rule,

and so bear false  
witness against  
Francis.

pursuen hem to þe deþ and maken prelatys lordis and comunes to do also; þei beren false wittnesse, and ben manquelleris and irregulere bifore god and traitouris to god and alle holi chirche. ȝif þei pursuen to þe deþ pore freris serabitis, þat kepen fraunseis reule and testament to þe riȝte vndyrstondynge and wille of fraunceis wiȝ outen glose of antecristis clerkis; þei beren false wyttnesse aȝeyns here patron and ben caynis breþren þat killyd his broþer fore his goode lyuynge. ȝif þei seyn þat cristis lawe is not ynow; and þe beste to reule holy chirche, but lawis of proude conceitouse and worldly clerkis ben nedful and betere, and stryuen aȝenst goode men þat techen þe goodnesse and excellence of cristis lawe and his ordynauce and declaren þe falsenesse and ypocrisie of worldly prestis newe lawis; þei beren false wittnesse and ben traitours to god and stynkyngne blasphemers.

\*(p. 10 MS.)  
IX. They covet  
lands and endow-  
ments.

\*¶ ȝif þei coueiten vnresonabiliche þe housis, þat ben goodis vnmeble of here neiȝeboris as londis or rentis, or perpetual almes of coffris, siȝ þei bynden hem to pouert of crist and his apostelis, þei breken þe neynþe maundement of god.

X. They seduce  
wives and  
maidens.

¶ ȝif þei leden a-wey mennus wyues or wenches in here newe habitis, to do lecherie bi hem as hem liste, þei breken þe laste comaundement. ȝif þei maken wyues and oþer wymmen hure sustris bi lettris of fraternite or oþere iapes, and geten children vpon hem to make hem freris or nunnes to holde vp here veyn sectis bi lordischipe, þei coueiten euyle here neiȝbores wyues and wenchis; namely, ȝif þei waiten hem in feldis alone or gardyns and sleen hem þer by keruyng to moche vsynge of lecherie. ȝif þei becomen pedderis berynge knyues, pursis, pynnys and girdlis and spices and sylk and precious pellure and forrouris for wymmen, and þerto smale gentil hondis, to gete loue of hem and to haue many grete ȝiftis for litil good ore nouȝt; þei coueiten euyle here neiȝeboris goodis.

They become  
pedlars that they  
may get large  
gifts for small.

Make presents  
of lap-dogs.

They become  
cake-sellers.

¶ ȝif þei ben made wafreris, ȝeuyngne lordes, ladies and riche men a fewe peris, appellis or nottis to haue huge ȝiftis to

þe couent, euyl þei coueiten here neȝeboris goodis. ȝif þei meyntenen men in extorſcions, in robberie, in false ſweryng They maintain men in oppreſſion to ſille ouer dere þer marchaundise and bie to grete cheep ſion of pore men, and in lecherie and grete synnes, vndirtakynge for þes cursed men at domes day for part of wynnyng; þei coueiten euyle here neȝeboris goodis; for þei dysceyuen here ſoulis herfore to euere dampnyng in helle. and ȝif þei breken þis, and worse alle þe comaundementis of god; þei ben perilous ypocritis and diſceyuen foule cristen men to meyntene goddis traitors principaly. ȝif þei geten hem worldly offis in lordis courtis, ſumme to ben ſtiwardis of They take ſecular office under lords, halle,<sup>1</sup> ſumme to ben kechene clerkis,<sup>1</sup> ſumme to ben lordis anyneris, and ſumme to ben conſeilours and reuleris of werris, and alſo to bein chamberleyns to lordes and ladies, and putten out pore gentil men of here office, and forſaken here cloiſter and leave their cloiſter. and oþer deuociſons for to haue lykyng of mete and drynk and cloþ and worldly worſchipe, and to ſende a grett quantite to here couent þat pore bedrede men ſchulden haue; \*þaſne [P. 11 MS.] þei ben ypocritis, enemyes of pore gentil men<sup>2</sup> and traitours of pore men and of lordes and ladies.

### Capitulum 4<sup>m</sup>.

See now where þes religious don aȝenſt þe werkis of mercy They offend against the works of mercy. boþe bodili and goſtely. ȝif þei waſten delicat metis and 1. Bodily. drynkis and ȝeuen nouȝt to pore men of here owene ſecte ne oþere þat ben in gret nede, but drawn pore mennus almes They eat richly, but do not feed the poor. and liſfode to here owne couent þat haȝ to moche of worldly goodis, to make feſtis huge to lordis and ladies and riche men of contres; þei feden not pore men but robben hem of here liſfode, and ſo ben manquelleris bifore god.

¶ ȝif þei feynen hem to be men of abyſtynence and grete They drink ale and wine, penaunce, and þer wiþ drynkyn dilicious ale and ſpiſid and heiȝe wyne, and beggen of þe comune peple to holden vp

<sup>1-1</sup> omitted X.<sup>2</sup> omitted X.

and leave the poor to perish of thirst.

his realte, and þeuē lordis and ladies þes swete drynkys for to magnyfie þes sectis, and suffren here owene breþeren boþe wiþ inne and oute to perische for þrist and myschef; þei þeuē not drenk to pore þristi men but rapere drawen here sustynauce fro hem vndir colour of holynesse, and so ben worse þan comune þeues and outlawis, for þei take fro riche men and parte oft wiþ pore men.

They have rich clothes, and do not share them with the poor.

¶ If þei gederen to hem self many wast and precious cloþes bi feyned beggerie and sotil ypocrisie, and partiþ not wiþ pore nedy men þat han nakid sidis and torne sleues and here children steruen for cold, neiþer here owen breþeren, be þei in neuere so gret myschef & cheueren for cold, hou cloþe þei nakid men, whanne bi ypocrisie þei drawen fro hem þis bodily almes bi whiche þes poralis schulden be cloþid and kept fro deþ. certis þei ben cursed disceyueris boþe of pore and riche, and ben irreguler bi-for god for myschefous deþ

They have great houses and entertain lords and ladies, but give no shelter to the poor.

þat þes nedy men suffren. If þei han grete waste houses for to resceyuen lordis and ladies, ȝe to soiorne among hem daies and ȝeris, and oþere riche men nyȝt and day, and helpen not pore nedi men wiþ herberwe in þo grete placis as kyngis paleis, but rapere drawe pore mennus goodis fro hem to þes waste placis, hou receyue þei pore men to herberwe?

They get the means to build by encouraging rich men in sin.

namely, whanne þei disceyuen riche men in makyng restitution of extorcions and euyl geten goodis, and suren hem of al perel if þei maken siche costly houses and wast paleises to men \*þat haue forsaken alle worldly ioie and pride and taken cristis mekenesse and gret pouert bi wilful profession. it semeþ þat þei ben preny enemys of pore men and disceyueris of riche men and schlauderis of crist puttyng on hym siche worldly pompe and ypocrisie.

Use of the big churches.

And if þei seyn þat grete chirchis ben worschipful to god and lykyng for þe peple to serue god inne, axe hem what charite it is to laten parische chirohis fallen down for defaute, where þe peple schulde heere goodis worde, goddis seruyce, and resceyue here sacramentis, and to maken newe chirchis as castelis wiþ outen nede; and wheþer crist preied most in

Decay of parish churches.



þe nyȝt is hillis, as þe gospel seiþ, and tauȝte mychel þe peple in desert and in þe wilde felde, and seide þat þe heiȝe temple schulde be distroied for þe synne of prestis þat weren þer-inne. And seyn þat lucifer and adam serueden not god in heuene ne paradys as þei schulden, but iob seruede wel god in þe donge hille and adam also in þe valey of wepyng, and so dide crist in þe hillis, and þe prophete danyel in þe deen of lyonys. and þouȝ men suffreden resonable cost of chirchis whi schulde þei suffre so grete cost of kechenes and ȝate housis and wast chambris for lordis and ladies and riche men, and a frere to haue a chambre for an erl or duk or a kyng whanne he is bounden to þe pouert of crist, siþ þis cost is geten bi beggen of pore men and disceit of riche mennus almes. ȝif þei visiten not pore men in prison for charite of god and sauynge of soulis, bute riche men is here prosperite to han part of here worldly goodis, hou don þei werkis of mercy? for sumtyme for enuye and hate ful trewe men ben sett in prison, and þanne it were most nede to conforte hem in bodi and soule aȝenst defeaute of mete and drynk and cloþ and grucchyng aȝenst god or dispeir; but it is worse ȝif þei be ypocrisie and false beggyng reuen fro pore prisoneris þe almes þat þei schulden ellis haue.

Waste on offices  
and guest rooms.

They visit the  
prosperous,

but not poor  
men, wrongly  
put in prison.

¶ ȝif þei visyten not pore men in here sikenesse but riche men wiþ preue massis and placeboes and dirige, þouȝ pore men ben neuere so deuout and han neuere so myche nede to ben amendid of here lif, hou seken þei þe helpe<sup>1</sup> of soule? but only or princypaly worldly muk or auauntage. where helpen þei sike men of bodely almes, þouȝ \*þei hem self han \*[p. 13 MS.] neuere so muche wast of mete and drynk, but rapere in siche tyme þei gedren fro sike men al þat þei may.

They do not visit  
the sick,

except to get  
gifts.

They bury only  
the rich.

¶ ȝif þei ben faste aboute to haue riche men biried in here housis for wynnyng and offryng and worldly meyntenaunce and forsaken pore men to be biried þere, þei ben false ypocritis, traueilyng in coueitise and pride and þeste, for þei drawen riche men fro her gostly fadris and here owne

<sup>1</sup> helpe AA.

parischenys, and so departen in tyme of deþ curatis and here gostly children.

They persecute  
poor priests,

¶ ȝif þei pursuen pore prestis to prison and bodily deþ, as hangynge, drawynge or brennynge, for þei techen trewely and frely þe gospel of ihū crist and techen men wiche ben false prophetis and ypocritis, siþ holy writt spekiþ of siche and biddiþ cristen men knowe hem bi here opyn werkis and flee fro hem; þanne ben þei perilous ypocritis and heretikis aȝenst goddis worschipe and sauynge of cristene soulis.

and put true  
men in prison.

¶ ȝif þei þursuen trewe lige men of þe kyng to endityng falsly and wyttyngly for þei reprouen here open synnes, hou visiten þei men in prison? siþ þei drawe trewe men to prison to loos of catel and deþ wiþ outen resonable cause.

They bring up  
poor men to  
judgment for not  
giving what they  
promised.

¶ ȝif þei drawen pore husbondemen to dom for þe bi-heȝten þem almes sumtyme and now ben tauȝt to ȝeuen here almes to pore neiȝeboris aftir þe gospel, or þat may not now paie so gret almes for pouerte and myschif þat þei ben inne, hou don þei þe werkis of mercy? siþ þei don opynly aȝenst charite.

### Capitulum 5<sup>m</sup>.

Failure in works  
of spiritual  
mercy.  
They preach fa-  
bles instead of  
Christ's gospel,

See now where þei failen in werkis of gostly mercy. first ȝif þei techen opynly fablys, cronyklis and lesyngis and leuen cristis gospel and þe maundementis of god, and ȝit don þei þis principaly for worldly wynnynge, frendschipe or veyn name þei don aȝenst þe chifwerk of gostly mercy; nameliche ȝif þei techen þat here singuler preiere is betere þan þe pater noster þat crist made him self, and þat preiynge bi lippis is plesauit to god þou; mennus lif þat preien be cursed of god for brekyng of his hestis and defaute of charite.

put special  
prayers above  
the Paternoster.

teach men to  
care for wealth,

¶ ȝif þei counseilen men to be bysi a-boute worldliche richessis more þan a-boute here soule helpe and þe blisse of heuene, and conseilen men more to taken vengauce bi open werre of here breþren þan to suffren patiently wrongys and

haue mercy on oþer neiȝeboris; þei don foule \*aȝenst þe \*[P. 14 MS.]  
 secunde werk of gostly mercy, to dampnacion of many men  
 boþ of body and soule. ȝif þei conseilen men to leue þe <sup>advise entering</sup>  
 fredom of cristis ordre and take here singuler ordre maad <sup>into religious</sup>  
 of synful men, seiynge þat it is þe beste for hem vp peril  
 of here soule; þei don aȝenst þe charite for loue of here owne  
 worschipe or wynnyng and blasphememen aȝenst god, makynge  
 hem self as witti as þe holy gost. siþ it is reseruyd only to  
 þe holy gost to ȝeuen ful conseil of þingis þat [ben] not  
 expresly comandyd ne defendid in holy writt, and þei taken  
 þis þinge vpon hem whanne þei ensuren to men þat it is best  
 for hem to be men of priuat religion. and also þei conseilen  
 sumtyme euene aȝenst þe sterynge of þe holy gost, and maken  
 men dispeire dampnyd for schrewidnesse of þis ordre and of  
 men þer-inne, for þer-by þei lasten more and ben more hardid  
 in synne and ypocrisie.

¶ ȝif þei chastisen not here breþeren for grete synnes, so þat <sup>punish open sins,</sup>  
 þei be preue, but ouerscharply pynschen hem for smale <sup>and not secret</sup>  
 synnes þat ben open and make hem seme vnholy to þe world;  
 þei failen foule in werkis of charite and ben false ypocritis.  
 and ȝif þei chastisen not here breþeren for opyn sweryng  
 veynly and pride and inpacience and false coueitynge of þer  
 neiȝeboris goodis, but for litil trespasyng aȝenst here owne <sup>punish more sins</sup>  
 statutis or customys; þei failen in dwe chastisyng of synne, <sup>against the order</sup>  
 for þei chargin not dispit or trespas don aȝenst god, but aȝenst <sup>than against God,</sup>  
 here owen worldly worschipe and name of holynesse.

¶ ȝif þei conforten not pore men in here myschif boþe of <sup>visit the rich and</sup>  
 soule and body but suffren hem perische for dispeir or defaute <sup>not the poor.</sup>  
 of bodily goodis, but rapere visiten hem in here prosperite  
 for worldly muk; þei failen fully in werkis of charite and  
 mercy to here breþeren. ¶ ȝif þei gon gladly and faste to lordis <sup>They go gladly to</sup>  
 housis and ladies þat ben gloriously araied, and deynen not <sup>fine houses, but</sup>  
 to come in pore mennus houses for stynk and oþere filþe; <sup>shun those of the</sup>  
 hou suen þei charite? siþ crist sparid not to visyte pore men <sup>poor for their</sup>  
 in a foul stynkyng stable and cold, and in þe colde greue <sup>stink and filth.</sup>  
 and in helle, and in many foule weies in þis world, boþe in

gret hungur and þrist and gret werynesse and cold and  
 muche schlaundrynge and cursyng and oþere peynes ynowe.  
 ¶ ȝif þei wolen not forȝeue litel trespace don aȝenst hem self or  
 feyned seyntis of here singuler secte but moste cruelly  
 \*pursuen men þerfore; þei forsaken pacience and mekenesse  
 and ensauple of cristis lif. and men dreden þat enuye,  
 rancour and euyl wille dwelliþ lengest amonges hem of alle  
 oþere men, be þei lordis, be þei prelatiþ, þouȝ þei ben men  
 of armys; but where is falsere holynesse, and so foulere  
 ypocrisie? for þouȝ a man speke aȝenst a lord, clerk or prelat  
 he schal sonere be reconailid be weie of mekenesse þan to  
 newe feyned religions; for þei wolen pursue to deþ or open  
 schame, and ȝit vndir colour of holynesse.

\*[p. 15 MS.]

They bear malice  
 longer than any  
 other men.

¶ ȝif þei soone lesen pacience and bringgyn men out of  
 pacience þat speken aȝenst here ypocrisie and euyl dedis;  
 hou don þei werkis of mercy, siþ þei schulde be here meke-  
 nesse and pacience bryngyn oþere in-to reste and pees of  
 body and soule. ȝif þei profren gentil men and oþere to  
 fȝte wiþ hem whanne þei reprouen hem of here opyn wyckyd  
 dedis, hou ben þei ensauple of crist and his apostelis to  
 saue oþere men in reste and charite? it semeþ þei ben fendis  
 children to stryue aȝenst þe treuþe, and meyntene syn and  
 bryngge oþer men to helle bi procuryng of fȝt and lesyng  
 of pacience and charite.

They will not  
 bear reproof.

¶ ȝif þei cursen and warien and pursuen here enemyes and  
 axen vengauunce of god aȝenst hem; hou suen þei charite of  
 crist þat biddiþ men to loue here enemyes, and don good to  
 men þat haten vs, and to preie for hem þat falsly chalengen  
 vs and falsly and wickidly pursuen vs? ȝif þei don þus and  
 welle werse aȝenst þe hestis of god and werkis of mercy boþe  
 bodily and gostly, þei ben foule ypocritis and not worþi but  
 to be putt out fro cristen men and defoulid, and not worþi  
 to be putt in þe erþe, þat is to haue þe leste office in þe  
 chirche.

They are re-  
 vengeful.

*Capitulum 6<sup>m</sup>*

See now wheþer þei faile in feiþ, hope and charite. *þif* Their failure in faith, hope, and charity.  
 þat o part holdiþ wiþ o pope and þe toþer wiþ o noþere pope, and eche partie seiþ and techiþ as bileue þat þis pope is verray and noon oþere, and alle þat bileuen not so ben cursed heretikis out of bileue; þei ben alle out of bileue and bryngen alle oþer out of bileue; and þit þei comunen to-gidre boþe partis as cristen men, and so þei seyn o þing and don þe contrarie as ful false men. *þif* þei techen opynly They teach that men's laws are better than Christ's.  
 and meyntene þat þe<sup>1</sup> bileue þat crist and his apostelis tauþten is not þe best and ynow; to brynge men to heuene, but lawis maade of worldly prestis ben nedful and betere to reule holy chirche bi; þei erren foule \*in þe feiþ and \*in blasphememen crist god and man. *þif* þei seyn, written and techen openly þat þe sacrament of þe auter þat men seen bitwen þe prestis hondis is accidentis wiþ-uten suget and neiþer bred ne cristis body; siþ holy writt seiþ þat it is breede and cristis precious body, þei ben cursed heretikis. *þif* þei putten on<sup>2</sup> crist þat he beggid as þei don fro toun to toun and fro hous to hous wiþ open cryeng; þei erren foule that Christ begged as they do.  
 in þe feiþ and putten error vpon crist. *þif* þei disceyuen They deceive men by false pardons.  
 men in feiþ bi fals pardons, bi mannus preiere, bi letteris of fraternyte and bi here feyned roten abite; þei ben false prophetis hauynge þe lickenesse of holy religion and dis-troien cristis religion, as poul seiþ. and so<sup>3</sup> of signes of anticrist, of fiftene tokenes bifore domes-day, and of veyn nouelries wiþ-uten noumbre as to men.

*þif* þei hopen to plesse god more bi kepyng of here owne They have more hope in their own traditions than in Christ's gospel.  
 tradicions and singuler obedience and profession to synful wrecchia, and maken oþere more<sup>4</sup> sikyrlly to hopen þus, þanne for kepyng of cristis gospel and trewe obedience, eche man to oþer in þe drede<sup>5</sup> of crist as crist and his apostelis diden, þei failen foule in good hope.

<sup>1</sup> here X.<sup>2</sup> of X.<sup>3</sup> omitted.<sup>4</sup> more is inserted in AA by a corrector.<sup>5</sup> degre X.

¶ *ȝif þei lonen more fonnyd ordynaunce of men þan ordynaunce of ihū crist, ȝif þei seken more here owne worschipe þan worschipe of god, ȝif þei setten here hertis more aboute worldly muk þan aboute vertuous lif and þe blisse of heuene and sauynge of cristen soulis; þei failen foule aȝenst charite and alle oþere vertues. þis men myȝten schewe bi seuene ȝiftis of þe holy gost, bi myspendynge of fyue wittis, bi sixe consentis of synne, and colourynge and meyntenyng of alle synnes preue and apert, and namely bi false procuryng of matrimonye bi soteltees and queyntese and false bihetynges, and fals dyuors makynge, hou þes newe feyned religious ben anticristis, sent prouyly of þe fend to disceyue men in gostly goodis and worldly, and norischen hem esily in synne, and dryuen hem to helle to euorlastynge deþ. and þerfore comaundiþ crist þat we be war and flee fro þe ypocrisie of pharisees.*

They seek their own praise more than the praise of God.

They make false divorces.

### Capitulum 7<sup>m</sup>.

Luke xii. 2.

Christ bids us speak the truth boldly.  
\*[p. 17 MS.]

Luke xii. 4.

And [Christ] seiþ þat þer is no þing keuerid þat ne it schal be schewid, and þere is no þing hid so priue þat it ne schal be wist and knowen. for þo þingis þat ȝe han seyð in derknessis schullen be seid in liȝt, and þat þing þat ȝe han spoken in ȝoure couchis or smale beddis schal be prechid in þe roof of housis. Here crist meniþ þat men schulden be war and oppynly telle þe \*trewþe aȝenst þis ypocrisie; for þouȝ it be now hid it schal be schewid at þe laste at þe day of dom. ¶ And also cowardise of cristis disciplis, ȝif þei spare for bodyli peyne and deþ to telle openly þe<sup>1</sup> treuþe of goddis lawe. And þerfore telliþ crist after to his disciplis þat þei schulden drede god and no þing ellis souereynly. Soþli seiþ crist: I sei to ȝow, my frendis, þat ȝe ben not agast of hem þat sleen þe body and haue<sup>2</sup> no þing more<sup>3</sup> to do after þes þinges; but I schal schewe ȝou whom ȝe owen to drede. drede ȝe hym souereynly, þat after þat he haþ slayn

<sup>1</sup> omitted X.

<sup>2</sup> omitted X.

<sup>3</sup> omitted X.

þe bodi, haþ power to sende boþe bodi and soule to helle with outen ende. so, I say to þow; drede þe him. here crist wol þat men drede no þing principaly but god and his offence. for þif men dreden bodili peynes and deþ, and þerfore ceessen to telle openly þe treuþe, þei ben wiþ þis vnable to resceyue þe blisse of heuene; and þif þei seyn openly and sadly þe treuþe of god, no þing may harmen hem so þat þei kepen pacience and charite. ¶ And herefore seiþ crist afterward to conforte his disciplis bi reson: ne be not fyue sparwis sold for an halpeny, and on of hem is not forȝetyn <sup>1</sup> Luke xii. 8.

bifore god; but also alle þe heris of þoure heuyd ben noumbrid, þerfore nyle þee drede; þe ben of more pris þan many sparwis. as þif crist menede and made þis reson: siþ god almyȝty takiþ so gret kepyng of smale briddis þat <sup>2</sup> on <sup>3</sup> of hem, <sup>4</sup> þe þe <sup>5</sup> leste, is not forȝeten, how myche more schal god kepen þow; siþ he is almyȝty, alwytti, and al ful of good wille, & <sup>6</sup> þere may no þing come with outen his wittyng and his ordynauce, and it is al for þe beste. ¶ And no þing may aȝenstonde, so þat men takyt paciently and þanke hem þerfore; and whanne þe heris of oure heuyd ben countid þat þei may not be lost, where we may be lost oþere in bodi or soule, siþe eche of vs is betre þan þe heris of oure hed. as þif crist seide þat no þing of vs, nere of bodi ne of soule, may perische ne suffre payne to oure harim, so þat we kepen pacience and charite. at þe laste word crist makeþ vs siker to dye for his lawe bi reward of þe blisse of heuene, whanne he seiþ þus, þat eche who euere knowlechijþ me bi-for men, <sup>7</sup> Luke xii. 8.

and mannus sone schal knowleche hym bi-fore þe angelis of god. here crist clepiþ hym self mannus sone, for he is þe sone of þe <sup>8</sup> vergyne marie, and so a persone of mankynde, þat is clepyd a man bi speche of holy writt. and knowlechyng <sup>9</sup> is seid here fore verrei knowleghyng <sup>10</sup> of crist, boþe in herte bi saad feiþ þat he is verrey god and verrey man with outen synne, & alle degrees, in þouȝt and speche and dede and alle circumstauncis þer of, and witnessyng in word þe treuþe of

God takes care of little birds and will let nothing happen to us but for the best.

How we must acknowledge Christ.

<sup>1</sup> forȝeten X. <sup>2</sup> þan. <sup>3</sup> or X. <sup>4</sup> omitted X. <sup>5</sup> omitted X. <sup>6-8</sup> omitted X.

þe gospel, hou crist lyuede most mekely and most porely and most *vertuously* bi-forn alle *opere* men as þe gospel techeth; and knowlechyng in lif, lyuynge after þe lawe of god and in \*wille to die þerfore þif it be nede; þis *verrei* knowlechyng schal make men to ben approued of crist\* at þe day of dome, biforn alle þe compayne of angelis and seyntis and good creaturis and euyle, hou þei were *verrei* wittnesse of crist in erþe bifore men, and in fulwille to suffre sclandris pursuynge and bodili deþ for þe loue of ihū crist and his lawe.

\*[p. 18 MS.]

### Capitulum 8<sup>m</sup>.

Here may men touche þe cowardise and fal[s]nesse of *prestis*, lordis, marchauntis and alle *opere* men þat failen in charite anemtis god and his lawe. where ben þo *prestis* þat maken hem so bisy aboute grete benefices, wordly worschipsis and stynkyng muk or drit of worldeli richesse, þat þei wolen *travaile*<sup>1</sup> gladly nyȝt and day in lordis courtis, in worldely offis, for litel cost takynge of þe lord in hope of benefices; and so bisily pat *vnneþis* may þei at reste seie metenes or masse with deuocioun. *opere prestis* rennen out of oure lond ouer grete sees and þoruȝ londes of enemyes in peril of here lif, in gret cold, hungur, þrist, stormes and tempestis, þat it is wondir hou þei may lyue; but hou bisi maken þei hem self and *opere* to lerne, kepe and teche goddis lawe? certis but þif þei more bisily lerne bi grete *traueile* and studie holy writt, and kepen it trewly in here lyuynge, and openly to ȝeue good ensauple to alle men, and prechen it sadly and trewly with als myche *traueile* and more, and þit it be nede ben wilful to die þerfore, þei may drede ful sore þat þei ben out of charite and out of feiþ, but þif it be ded feiþ as fendis han; for þei *traueilen* more for worldly worschipe and stynkyng drit þan for loue of god and helpe of mannis soule.

They do secular work in hope of a benefice.

They take gold out of the land

And þit, þat is werse, þei beren gold out of england, and

<sup>1</sup> omitted X.



sumtyme it comiþ to ours enemys and þer-bi þei ben which goes to our enemies.  
strengyed aʒenst vs, and bi takynge of prisoneris of oure  
nacion, and sumtyme oure enemys killen many of oure lond  
þorouþ siche traueile for benefices to gret reprof of oure  
rewme. And ʒif þe gold<sup>1</sup> come to rome, þer-bi ben benefices  
of þe chirches bouȝt and sold. ¶ For who so may most gold Benefices sold at Rome.  
brynge sunnest schal be sped to grete benefices, þouȝ he be  
vnable boþe of kunnyng and lif, and able men of kunnyng  
and lif ben putt bihynde; summe for þei willen not chaffare  
by symonye, and summe bi bisinesse of studie and techynge  
of holy writt, for þei<sup>2</sup> wollen neiþer dwelle in lordis courtis  
ne renne to rome wiþ þe kyngis gold. and ʒif gooddis lawe and  
mannus and reson ben wel souȝt þis chaffarynge wiþ suche  
benefices and gold is symonye on boþe partis; and so heresie,  
as þes lawereris written openly in here owene lawe. And These Rome-runners change gold for lead. [p. 19 MS.]  
þus þes rome renneris beren þe \*kyngys gold out of oure lond  
& bryngen aȝen deed leed and heresie and symonye and  
goddis curse. and comunly whanne þes heretikis comen bi  
symonye to gret benefices þei ben not bisi to lerne þe gospel  
& teche it cristen men, but ȝeue hem to huntynge and When they have bought their benefice, they will not do their duty in it.  
hauk[y]nge and veyn pleies, and hanten tauernys of wyn and  
ale, aboute strumpetis and grete festes, riche cloþing and Their dissipated life; hunting, hawking and haunting of taverns and loose society.  
gay squyeris and opere getteris, þat al-most noon schal be  
so nyse and worldly proude as þes stynkyng heretikis. and  
ʒif ony poore prestis wole come to here chirchis and treuly  
dispise synne and frely teche goddis lawe, þe gospel of ihu  
crist, and comaundementis of god, þes coueitous symonyentis  
welen be þe firste to lette hem with þis grete colour þat suche  
prechoris ben heretikis; and þis þei seyn for þei ben ful of  
heresie and wolden þat no man spoke aȝenst here cursed lif.  
þus þei techen not hem self but ensauple of pride, lecherie  
and opere synnes, and letten opere trewe prestis to techen  
goddis lawe. and þis is on of þe most vengauce þat god  
takiþ on synful men, to suffre suche ypocritis to reule þe  
peple & drawe hem to helle bi wiþ-drawynge of goddis word

<sup>1</sup> god X.<sup>2</sup> omitted X.

They have made  
compact with the  
devil.

and þeyunge of opyn<sup>1</sup> ensauple of synne. for haue þei here myrþe and iolite, nowarde to hem hou faste þe woluyes of helle wirien cristen soulis & beren hem to helle; for þei han maad priuily couenaunt with þe deuyl þat hou many beneficiis þat<sup>2</sup> þei may gete bi lesynges & symonye þe deuyl schal strangle þe soulis at his wille as for hem, so þat þei han here lustis of grete statis and worschipe of þe world and plente of richessis and glotonye and lecherie and meynteneris þerinne. & þis is luciferis pride, stynkyng ypocrisie and anticristis blasphemye, to crie and meyntene þat suche ben able curatis and grete men of holy chirche.

### Capitulum 9<sup>m</sup>.

Lords fall into  
hypocrisy and  
want of charity

in going to law  
and fighting for  
their private  
ends,

but will do no  
such thing for  
God's sake, to  
whose defence  
they are bound  
by tenure.

Also lordis fallen foule in ypocrisie and in defaute of charite, for þei ben redi to holde vp here worldly name, lordschipe and meyntene here courtis wiþ gret cost, sendyng of men boþe of lawe and of armes, & prikyng bi here owen persones for to plede, for to fytte and for to lyue & dye þerfore, and to be vengid on men þat don aȝenst here wille, worschipe, or profit; but for to meyntene goddis lawe and stond for his worschipe, þat þei ben holden to vp peyne of lesyng of here lordschipe & anemtis god, and lesyng of bodi and soule and helle wiþ-outen hende, who is þat lord þat wolle treuli speke, coste, traueile, and suffre mekely dispit, pursuyng and deþ in tyme of nede. þes lordis owen to quake aȝenst domes day and tyme of here deþ, þat more bisili traueilen to meyntenen here litil worldly lordshipe<sup>3</sup> and to seke here owen worschipe & drit of þis world þanne þei traueile \*to meyntene þe most riȝtful lawe & ordenaunce of ihū crist in his chirche, & to procure, norische & meyntene cristen soulis in good gouernaile and holy lif. certis if þei don þus and coueiten þerbi to be holden goode cristen lordis, here pride, ypocrisie and false coueitise wole bryng hem to euere-lastyng peyne in helle. ¶ Also marchauntis and riche men of þis wikked world fallen in

Merchants fall  
into hypocrisy.

<sup>1</sup> omitted X.

<sup>2</sup> omitted X.

<sup>3</sup> worschipe X.

moche ypocrisie; for þei traueilen nyȝt & day, bi watir & lond in cold, & in hete, bi false sotiltis and cautelis & grete sweri[n]ges nedles & false, for to gete muche drit or muk of þis world, to gete riche wyues, & purchase londis & rentis, & dewelle in pore mennus dette after þat þei han descouyned hem in byynge of here catel; & ȝit ben so bisi in þouȝt & speche in goyng and rydyng abouten þis muk þat vnnep̃ may þei onys þenke on god & han mynde of here false robberie þat þei vsen bi false wettes & mesures to amende hem. ȝif alle here businesse & loue goo þus wrongly to þe world & nouȝt or to litel to heuene and heuenely þingis, þei failen foule of holy lif; & ȝit holden hem self holy & coueiten to ben holden holy of oþer men, & ben wode ȝif men speken treuly aȝenst here cursed synnes; but *certes* þis is ypocrisie.

They are so busy in getting muk of this world and rich wives

that they cannot think of God.

False weights and measures.

### Capitulum 10<sup>m</sup>.

Generaly ypocrisie regnep̃ among alle statis of cristen men; for whanne men ben cristened þei forsaken þe deuyll, al his pride & al his werkis, þat ben werkis of synne; and ȝit þei turnen to synne as an hound to his spuyng and here-wiȝ holden hem goode cristen men. but summe don verrey penaunce for þes synnes, & summe dwelle euere stille þer-inne & rennen to helle, as crist seiȝ in þe gospel & in þe bok of iob; & many men don bodily penaunce, as fastyng and goyng barfote, but þei fasten not fro pride ne enuye ne coueitise, but preien for wrongful vengauce of oþere enemyes aȝenst charite, and þis is foule ypocrisie to make men holden hem holy whanne þei stynken bifore god for old endured synne. For god seiȝ be ysaye þat a man to turmente his hed and payne his bodi only is not þat fast þe whiche god chees, <sup>1</sup>but þis is þe fast þat god ches; <sup>1</sup>a man to breke þe bondis of synne & do werkis of mercy to poore men & nedi. ¶ But vpon þe text of þis gospel bi ordre of seynt matheu Ion wiȝ þe gildene

Hypocrisy reigns among all Christians since they break their baptismal vows.

Some repent,

some do false penance, but keep their evil will.

Isaiah lviii. 5.

John Chrysostom.

<sup>1.1</sup> omitted X.

Duty of laymen  
to maintain the  
truth of holy  
writ.

\*[p. 21 MS.]

But lords and  
mayors uphold  
preachers of lies  
and chronicles.

mouþ seiþ þat a prest is in dette to teche openly and treuly þe treuþe of goddis lawe, and ellis he is traitour to þe treuþe of holy writt. <sup>1</sup> So a lewyd man is boundyn to mayntene þe treuþe <sup>1</sup> of holy writt, and ellis he is *traitour* to god & to his lawe and his peple. & here-fore riche men owen to drede of treson and traitre aȝenst god & his lawe whanne þei meyntene not þe treuþe of þe gospel, but ben aboute to stoppe it & techeris þer-of bi sotil cautelis & false lesynges for fleschli loue or coueitise. for as iudas dide þei sillen þe treuþe, and so crist þat is treuþe, <sup>2</sup>for money or <sup>3</sup>fleschly loue. And siþ þei sillen treuþe þat is a spiritual good for money or worldely þyng <sup>4</sup> þei ben cursed symonyentis & so heretikis. moche owen þei to quake, siþ crist seiþ in þe gospel þat who euere dispisiþ cristis disciplis, in þat he dispisiþ crist; and at þe day of dom þere schal be lesse peyne to sodom & gomor, þat weren distroied for synne, þan to þo men þat wolen not resceyue cristis disciplis and his gospel, ne lyue after þe techyng of cristis gospel. principaly siþ suche men slen crist as moche as in hem is, and dryuen þe holy gost out of his temple & þe holy trynite; & ȝit þei taken þe office to meyntene goddis lawe and techeris þer-of, & vpon þis seruyces þei han þes heiȝe statis & lordischipis. but certis it is foul ypocrisie þus to suffre synne regne, siþ lordis and men of grete statis, as maires, ben so muche biholden to destroie it, & mowne welle don it in dede, & to lette trewe prechoris of þe gospel, & meyntene prechours of lesyngis, fablis & cronyclis for monye & worldely frendschipe.

### Capitulum 11.<sup>4</sup>

Hypocrisy of  
Pharisees the  
worst.

But ȝit ypocrisie of phariseis is most cursed & perilous of alle oþere; for whanne þei han disceyued cristendom þis hundrid ȝeer & more bi ypocrisie & false prechyng of fablis & errouris & heresies, magnifyenge synful mennus ordenaunce

<sup>1-1</sup> omitted X.

<sup>2</sup> of X.

<sup>3</sup> omitted X.

<sup>4</sup> This is headed Chap. XII. in X. In AA Chap. IX. and X. are run together, and this is marked Chap. X.

abouen goddis lawe & ordenaunce, & drawen pore mennus almes & lifode to proude beggeris to make grete wast houses, and desceyue men bi fals assoilyng, bi fals<sup>1</sup> pardon, bi veyne preiers & synguler or specyal, & letteris of fraternite, puttynge open beggyng & clamours on iha crist, þanne þei crien fast þat poore prestis treuli & frely prechyng þe gospel as crist biddiþ, techyng men to do verray penaunce for here synnes & not trusten ouermuche to false pardon & cursed preieris of ypocritis, & to do here almes to pore feble men crokid & blynde, as crist seiþ him self; þat þei ben cause of alle þe<sup>2</sup> perturbacion of þe rewme; but þei lyen falsly & openly to eche trewe man. for siþ synne is cause of perturbacion, & þes prestis vpon here kunnyng þat god ȝeueþ hem of holy writt & þer-wiþ bisien hem nyȝt & day to distroye synne, þei ben aboute to make pees betwixe god & man. & þei þat meyntenen synne bi false confessionys & veyn special preieris & pardons ben most cause of discencion & werriis. but here þei suen þe fadir of lesyngis þat stireden þe heiȝe prestis & pharisees in cristis tyme to pute on hym & his disciplis þat þei disturbeden þe lond of iude & wolden distroie it, for crist and his disciplis reproueden þe coueitise, ypocrisie & falsnesse of þe heiȝe prestis & false pharisees. so þe deuyll steriþ now false newe pharisees of synguler religion wiþ-oute cristis ordynaunce, þat ben more sotil in malice & lesyngis and ypocrisie þan<sup>3</sup> þe firste, to stoppe pore prestis fro prechyng of \*þe gospel & reprouyng of synne, for bi þis offis of crist don treuly here synnes of lesyngis and ypocrisie schulde be knowen and distroied and goddis lawe knowen and kept and synne chasid out of lond. but false ypocritis stryuen aȝenst þis profet of cristen men, & clepen techyng of þe gospel & goddis hestis newe techyng, & techyng of verrey penaunce doyinge & of riȝtful ȝeuyng & of almes and open prechyng aȝenst synne errour aȝenst charite. God kepe cristen men fro ypocrisie & false lesyngis of pharisees and here meynteneris. Amen.

They accuse poor priests of disturbing the realm,

who would make peace between God and man.

The High Priests and Pharisees did so with Christ.

Now the devil stirs up these hypocrites to stop poor priests from preaching, lest their lies and hypocrisy should be known.

\*[p. 22 MS.]

<sup>1</sup> omitted X.

<sup>2</sup> omitted X.

<sup>3</sup> þat X.

## II.

## HOW MEN OUGHT TO OBEY PRELATES.

I do not think this tract is by Wyclif. Its tone is not that of a man who has known the Court and been engaged in political affairs, but rather of some poor clergyman, who felt the burdens laid upon him by the bad government of the Church, and spoke from the bitterness of his personal experience. The extravagant expression, 'two or three thousand miles' (p. 30), points in the same direction. On the other hand, the text, 1 Cor. v. 5, is used here in the same way as in *Prelates*, No. IV. in this volume, and the warning against misusing the freedom given by God (p. 32) recalls a fine passage in the tract on *Feigned Contemplative Life* (No. X.).

Copied from the Corpus MS. X, and collated with the Dublin MS. AA.

## SUMMARY.

- CHAP. I. Prelates charge poor priests and those who believe with them that they disobey their superiors, that they make light of excommunication, and break the law. They are willing to obey as far as they may in accordance with God's commandments. But there is a hardship in men being summoned to distant places for no good purpose. It hinders men from doing the duties which God commands. Wickedness of prelates—their simony and other sins. If prelates will do their duty, poor priests will obey them.
- II. As to excommunication, poor priests say that they will not incur God's curse for anything in heaven or earth, but they would rather be wrongfully cursed by man than break God's law. Excommunication often inflicted from spite. Curates ought not to execute letters of excommunication which they know to be ill-grounded.
- III. As to law, true men will obey man's law so far as it agrees with God's. Laws are often made only to support the pride and pomp of prelates, and are an undue burden.

Hou men owen obesche to prelatis drede curs &  
kepe lawe.

*Capitulum primum.*

Prelatis sclaundern pore prestis & opere cristen men þat þei wolen not obesche to here souereynes, ne dreden curs, ne drede ne kepe þe lawe, but dispise alle þing þat is aȝenst here likyng. And herfore þei ben werse þan iewis or paynymes, and alle lordis & prelates & myȝti men schulden distroie hem, for ellis þei wolen distroie holy chirche & make eche man to lyue as hym likiþ; and no þing may more distroie cristendom.

Prelates slander poor priests, charging them with disobedience to the law,

¶ But here poore prestis & trewe men mekely wolen and wilfully obesche to god & holy chirche, & to eche man in erþe in as myche as he techiþ treuly goddis comaundementis & profitable treuþe for here soulis, and no more owiþ ony man to obeche to crist god & man, ne to ony apostle. and if ony worldly prelat axe more obedience he his anticrist & luciferis maister, for ihū crist is god of riȝtwisnesse & treuþe & of pees & charite, and may not do aȝenst riȝtwisnesse ne treuþe ne helpe of mennus soulis ne charite, siþ he may not lye ne denye him self. hou þanne schulde or myȝtte ony synful prelat charge men and constreyne to do aȝenst riȝtwisnesse & helpe of soulis and<sup>1</sup> good conscience; for crist seiþ in þe gospel of seynt ion þat þe sone may not do but þat þing he haþ seyn his fadir don; & þerfore crist comaundid to alle men þat þei schulde not bileue to him but if he dide þe werkis of þe fadir of heuene. where cristen men schullen be constreyned be anticristis clerkis to don after here comaundement whanne þei don not werkis of god but werkis of þe fend? & þus crist spekiþ to þe iewis & axeþ hem whi þei bileuen not to hym if he seiþe treuþe; as who seiþ, if he seide nouȝt<sup>2</sup> treuþe þei schulde nouȝt<sup>2</sup>

but poor priests are willing to obey as far as God's commandments allow.

John v. 19.

John x. 37.

John viii. [46].

<sup>1</sup> in X.

<sup>2</sup> omitted X.

John xviii. [23].  
\* [p. 23 MS.]

Prelates want  
their subjects to  
come to any dis-  
tant corner of the  
diocese.

With their wealth  
and horses, they  
should go after  
their subjects.

bileue to hym. and þer-for crist seiþ to þe iewis who of  
þou schal repreue me of synne, & he wold þat eche man  
hadde do so ȝif he myȝtt treuly. þerfore in tyme of his passion  
crist seide to þe bischopis seruaunt whanne he smote him  
in þe face: \*ȝif I haue spoken euyl, bere þou witnesse of  
euyl. & siþ prelatiſ ben vikeris of crist, þei owen to suen  
to hym in þis obedience & axe no more of ony man. ¶ But  
here is þe sore in þis obedience; prelatiſ axen þat prestis  
& opere sugetiſ schulden come for here souereyns whider  
euere hem likid, at þe ferþeste place of here diocese, þouȝ  
prelatiſ kunyn not holy writt ne kepen it, but don opynly  
þer aȝenst many weies; & þis is wrong for many skillis.  
first, siþ crist god & man souȝte mannis soule lost þoruȝ  
synne bi ȝritti ȝeer and more wiþ grete trainele, werynesse  
& many peynes, bi many þousand myles vpon his feet, in gret  
cold and stormes & tempestis, prelatiſ schulden not couche  
in castellis & suffre þe fende to denoure cristene soulis, &  
þanne make a pore man to renne two or þre þousand myles  
& ȝeue hem þere ensaunple of pride & opere synnes. siþ  
þei han so myche tresour & grete hors, & ben heiȝe vikeris  
of crist to seue his lif in mekenesse and pouerte and harde  
traueile to saue mennes soulis, and siþ þei ben holden to spende  
here catel and lese here bodily lif for sauynge of cristen soulis  
as did crist & his apostelis, myche more owe þei to spende  
a litil traueile and money to seke & visyte synful men &  
esen hem<sup>1</sup> in body & soule. And not maken hem nedlis  
to spende here litel catel and be impacient & grucchyng  
aȝenst god & man & out of charite. for we reden not in  
al þe lawe of grace þat crist or ony of his disciplis vrede  
þis symonyng or axid þis obedience of ony synful man riche  
or pore. lord whi schulde a synful ydiot axe more obedience  
þan<sup>2</sup> diden crist & his apostelis? & we rede not in þe lawe  
of grace þat crist apperid comusly bifore þe heiȝe prestis  
and pharisees fore here symonyng ne his apostelis after  
sendynge of þe holy goste, But ȝif þei weren constreyned

<sup>1</sup> omitted X.

<sup>2</sup> þat X.



bi violence or ellis if þei weren in place where criste tauȝte in þe temple. ¶ Also crist techiþ in the gospel þat a man owiþ to leue þe lasse good & do þe more; siþ he comaundid a man to leue þe beriyng of his fadir and go preche þe Matthew viii. 21. gospel. þanne a prest schulde not leue prechyng of the Priests should not go away from their preaching. for any such bidding. gospel & renne to vncerteyn placis for biddynge of worldly prelatiſ, enemyes to god & his ſeruauntis, siþ prechyng of þe gospel is betere þan bodely rennyng so to ferre placis, for peril of enemyes, for wastynge of pore mennus goodis, and for drede of rebelte aȝenst god. for seynt ierom seiþ in þe popis lawe þat he þat leueþ þe more good or putteþ it behynde þe lesse good synneþ not menely but greuouſly. siþ siche \*somyng of prelatiſ is not groundid in cristis lif \*[p. 24 MS.] ne his aposteliſ ne reson, but in antiſcristis power bi downyng of clerkiſ wiþ ſeculer lordischiſe aȝenst holy writt. and þus inſtede of cristis mekenesse & pouert and charite and trewe techyng of þe gospel is brouȝt in worldly pride of prestis and coueitise & enuye and discencion in cristis peple, & bodily turmentyng bi prestis, as þou; þei weren worldly lordis of þe kyngis lege men boþe of bodi & of catel, & chargyng of ſouliſ wiþ grete chargis aȝenst þe fredom of goddis lawe and the helpe of ſouliſ her-bi brouȝt in; for þes worldly prelatiſ chargen men to speke not aȝenst here pride and coueitise ne bryng hem to þe ordynaunce of crist, but raþer to lyue hem self in pride and falsnesse of þis world þan to turne to þe mekenesse and trewe lif and to þenke on here deþ day, for bi þis goode lif of ſeculeris þe lif of worldly prelatiſ schulde be knowen for ypocrisie and cursednesse. and þus bi þis feyned power of somyng and cursyng worldly prelatiſ ben maad cruel turmentours of cristis ſeruauntis, and schewen hem self & make, but Prelates do not wish laymen to lead a good life, lest their own should be seen in its true light. falsly, lordis of mennus bodies & catel & ſouliſ also, to stoppe & lette good lif of cristene men, þat þe holy trynyte may not do for his riȝtwisnesse & charite; but where ben falsere antiſcristis, perilouſere heretikis, & cursedher blasphemeres. ¶ Also no man owiþ to putte by-hynde goddis Prelates persecute Christ's servants.

biddynge and þe byddyng of a synful man bifore; & god biddiþ eche man vp peyne of dampnacion þat haþ wif & children & meyne to gouerne hem wel in goddis lawe. þanne no weddid man owiþ to leue his wife & children & meyne vngouerned, & goo many hundred myles in drede of þeues & enemyes, & wast his goodis & suffre his folk to perische in soule or in body. and myche more no curat owiþ to leue his schepe vnkept among þe wolues of helle, & ride with grete coost to ferre placis for pride, enuye or coueitise of worldly clerkis. & þis reson makiþ sikernesse for prestis to dewelle with goddis peple & profite to hem, & for children to take cure of here heldris, & not ride ne renne aboute & leue þis heste of god vndon for somonyng of worldly prelatis. Also crist seiþ in þe gospel þat iif þe blynde lede þe blynde þei fallen boþe into þe lake. þanne siþ worldly prelatis ben blynde in goddis lawe, boþe in kunnyng þer-of & lif þer-after, no man schulde be led bi hem in keypyng of his soule, for drede lest þei falle boþ in-to 'helle. For siþþe þei ledyn hemself to ' helle-ward for ignorauce of holy writt or coueitise of worldeli worschipe, heiþe states & worldly muk, þei wolen lede oþere men þe same weie. & þus þei ben cursed of god, for þat þat is good & goddis lawe þei dampnen for euyl & erroure, \* & <sup>2</sup> þat þat is errour & <sup>2</sup> euyl a;enst goddis lawe þei chesen & techen for good and profytable; & þus þei dampnen hemself & alle þat ben led bi hem. Also bi reson & mannus lawe iif a man be somonyd to-gidre to þe heiþere iuge & a lasse he schal be excused fro þe lasse bi þe vertue of þe heiþere iuge; but eche man is somoned first of god to worschipe hym in <sup>3</sup> alle his witt & alle his myȝt, bifor þat a worldly prelat somone hym to renne aboute, in whiche rennyng his witt & his myȝt schullen be perid; þanne bi vertue of þis cheef domesman he owiþ to be excused fro þis somonyng of worldly prelat. but be <sup>4</sup> þe suget ware of feynynge here, þat he waste not ne mysusse þe ȝiftis of god vnder colour

Prelates make men leave their wives and families,

and make curates leave their flocks unkept among the wolues of hell.

Luke vi. 39.

Worldly prelates are blind guides, who lead themselves and others to hell.

\*[p. 25 MS.]

A summons to a higher iudge excuses from attendance on a lower.

<sup>1.1</sup> omitted X.    <sup>2.2</sup> omitted X.    <sup>3</sup> & X.    <sup>4</sup> omitted X.

of þis fredom; for god wole haue rekennyng of eche dede, of eche word, & of eche þouȝt, & of eche ȝifte, & eche tyme, & moment. And be þe worldly prelat ward of blasphemye here, þat he compelle not for his pride þis suget to putte bihynde þe betre worschipyng of god and vnder colour of obedience make hym to myspende þe tyme & goddis ȝiftis. ¶ Also men of lawe & resoun seyn it is worst of alle to take<sup>1</sup> dom vnder a suspect domesman; but þes worldly prelatis ben suspect domesmen anemtis goddis seruauantis, for þei been enemys to þe persone of cristis seruauantis & also to þe cause of god. for comunly þei comen to here statis bi symonye & so ben heretikis, as þe popis lawe seiþ, & contynen<sup>2</sup> in pride, coueitise, extorcious,<sup>3</sup> & meynthyng of here synne & opere mennys for annuel rente, & haten & pursuen boþe cristis lawe & his seruauantis þat speken aȝenst here synne, to amende hem þer-of & alle þat ben vnkunynge in goddis lawe; how schulde a treue man be demyd bi suspect iuges. & sicke vnkunynge & euyl leuyng prelatis ben most hardy to dampne trewe<sup>4</sup> treuthis of holi writ & pursue trewe<sup>4</sup> men to prison & deþ þat meynthenen holi writt & treweþe aȝenst here coueitise, pride, symonye & lustis. ¶ And newe religious assessours of þes vnkunynge worldely prelatis ben more suspect þan ony oþer; for þei grounden hem in þis, þat holi writt is fals but here owen doctours and gloses ben trewe. And so þei putten falsnesse & defaute of witt in god, & seyn þat a synful ydiot & in caas a deuyl of helle is trewere, wittiere & more ful of charite & myȝt to teche men treweþe þanne is þe trinyte & ihū crist god & man. & þei haten more cristis seruauantis þat stonden for þe treweþe of holi writt & ihū cristis leuyng & reprouen here ypocrisie & schewen here falsnesse to þe peple; and þey<sup>5</sup> ben more sotil in malice, & dyaceyuen more lordis & ladies & þe comunes in feiþ & charite, & maken hem to triste þat it<sup>6</sup> is almes

These prelates  
are suspected  
judges.

Prelates mostly  
come to their  
position by  
simony.

The assessors  
whom the pre-  
lates take from  
religious orders  
are unfit to judge.

<sup>1</sup> make AA.

<sup>4-6</sup> omitted X.

<sup>2</sup> conteynen X.

<sup>5</sup> omitted X.

<sup>3</sup> omitted X.

<sup>6</sup> omitted X.

\*[p. 26 MS.]

2 John, 10.

Let prelates do  
their duty, and  
poor priests will  
obey them truly.

to distroye trewe men þat stonden \*for goddis lawe & trewe  
lyuynge. & þus þe dampnable ignoraunce of goddis lawe  
& cursed lif of þes worldly prelatis & stronge meyntenynge  
of here owen synne & opere mennus ben cause whi pore  
prestis & cristen men han hem suspect of heresie & enemyte  
boþe of goddis cause & his seruauantis; & þer-fore þe fien  
fro hem as anticrist and heretykes, as icon þe euangelist  
techip in his epistilis. ¶ But lete prelatis studie bisili & treuly  
holy<sup>1</sup> writt & lyuen opyn wel þer-affir, and distroie opyn  
synne of opere men be here witt and myȝt, & pore prestis  
& cristene men wiȝ-uten ony somonyng wolen wiȝ gret  
trauile and cost and wille, ȝee bi londe & bi water, mekely  
come to hem & don hem obedience & reuerence, as þei  
wolden to petir & poul & cristis apostlis. deme þe world  
wheþer þis dyuysion belong on worldely prelatis vnkunynge  
and cursed of lif, or on pore prestis and trewe men þat fayn  
desiren nyȝt & day to knowe goddis wille & worschipe  
& do it bifore alle opere þingis.

### Capitulum 2<sup>m</sup>.

Christian men  
will not deserve  
God's curse  
for any worldly  
good,

but they will  
gladly suffer  
man's curse  
rather than  
break God's law.

Anticrist's  
clerks magnify  
man's curse.

As to cursynge, cristen men seyn trewely þat þei dreden  
it so moche þat þei wollen not wilfully & wityngly  
disserue goddis curse, neiþer for good in erþe ne in heuene;  
ne mannus curse in as myche as it acordip wiȝ þe riȝtful  
curs of god; but þei wolle wiȝ grete ioie of soule rapere  
suffre mannus wrongful curs þan wityngly & wilfully  
breke ony comaundement of god for to wyne þer-bi alle  
worschipsis of þis world, and to kepe here body in alle  
likyngis neuere so longe; & rapere to suffre sclaudryng  
& bacbityng and prisonyng and exilid, hangyng, drawyng,  
quarteryng and brennyng wiȝ helpe and grace of god  
þan to forsake þe treuþe of holy writt & lif of crist, for  
ellis þei weren not in charite ne in weie of saluacion. but  
anticristis clerkis magnyfien so myche mannus curs þat  
þei taken noon hede to þe dredeful curs of god; as ȝif

<sup>1</sup> omitted X.

men were more myȝtti & riȝtful þan is almyȝtti god in trynȝte. for þouȝ men breken opynly alle þe comaundementis of god & lyuen in pride, coueityse, enuye, glotonye and oþer synnes, but ȝif it be lecherie, þere renneþ no mannus curs; ne for lecherie ȝif men wolen paie rente bi ȝeere & dwelle stil þer-inne als longe as hym liste; so al þe drede is turned to mannus curs and no þing to goddis curs.

They curse for no sin but lechery, and for that they will take a rent.

¶ But ȝif a man trespas litel or nouȝt aȝenst a prelat or aȝenst þe wynnyng of clerkis, he schal be cursed & pursued þat al þe ende of his kyn may haue sorowe þerfore; ȝee, þouȝ a treuþe of holy writt & reson be seid \* bi charite aȝenst þe pride, coueityse & open wrong þat prelatis don to here neiȝboris, boþe in here gostly offis & also worldly wrongis; and here-bi þei ponyschen more for here owen dispit or wrong þan for dispit of god almyȝtȝ. ¶ But here men musen<sup>1</sup> whi prelatis ben so redy to curse in here owne cause, siȝ petir techiȝ cristen men to blisse & not no werie ne curse; & god biddiȝ vs loue oure enemyes & don good to hem þat haten vs, and to preie for men þat falsly pursuen vs. siȝ he þat cu[r]seþ anoþer man for his owne vengauunce or worldly catel more þanne for to venge synne don aȝenst god & for þe helpe of þe cursed mannus soule cursiȝ him-self, for he doiȝ aȝenst charite, as gregori techiȝ in þe popis lawe. cortes men dreden þat þes prelatis ben ful of goddis curse for here symonye in<sup>2</sup> here entre, & sillyng of sacramentis & gostly officis, as ordres ȝeuyng for money, & halwyng of chirchis & auteris, & for extorcions of pore men, & meynȝtenyng of synful men in here synne for money, þat þei han no part of goddis bliissyng and þerfore cursed fruyt spryngiȝ out of a cursed tree.

\*[p. 27 MS.]

even for rebukes given in charity.

1 Peter ii. [23.]  
Matt. v. [44.]

23qu. 40<sup>o</sup>. inter querelas.

These prelates are cursed by God for their simony.

¶ Lord, whi schulde curatis pronounsen here breþeren a cursed for nakid lettris of syche coueitous prelatis, enemyes of crist & his seruauantis, when þei knowe no cause bi-for god where-for þei be cursed of hym but han euydence bi spekyng & open lif of here neieȝboris þat þei ben in good

Curates should refuse to execute these letters of excommunication if they know them to be unjust.

<sup>1</sup> mowe sen X.

<sup>2</sup> & X.

lif & in charite. Siþ crist seiþ in þe gospel þat he þat  
 Matt. v. 22. seiþ to his broþer: þou fool! wiþ-out sufficiente cause, &  
 he þat seiþ to his broþer þat haþ þe holi gost wiþ good  
 lif & charite þat he is voide & wiþ-oute kunnyng, schal  
 be gilty of helle, wheþer þis be charite to curse a man for  
 Poor men cursed sexe pans whan he may vnneþis lyue be al his trauaile,  
 for sixpence. & for he traueliþ not at here som[en]yng an hundrid myle  
 or moo or lesse & leueþ not his wif & children vngouerned.  
 for iif a preste pronounse siehe a man a cursed þat is blissed  
 of god he liþeþ vpon his broþer & beriþ fals witenesse aȝenst  
 goddis dom. for þou; he apere not at here somonyng to  
 ȝeuen hem mony at here wille, he may ben excused aȝenst  
 god & man for many skillis. þerfor þis nakid lettre of  
 coueitouse prelatis is no sykirnesse anemtis god to pro-  
 nounse a cristen man for cursed, & noon obedience schulde  
 constreyne a prest to witenesse a falskede aȝenst his broþer  
 and aȝenst his conscience but iif it be anticristis obediēce,  
 for certis god wole not constreyne a man to þis false  
 obediēce. Lord, where anticrist & his clerkis schullen.  
 Prelates might curse a man whom they knew to have broken God's commandments. iif prelatis knowen þat þis man were cursed of god for  
 brekyng of his hestis þei myȝten pronounse þis to þe peple  
 to make oþere men to flee his companye as an heþene  
 mannys. But comunly þei knowe not þis so wel as oþere  
 pore men, \*for þei taken no reward to þe hestis of god,  
 \* [p. 28 MS.] but al to here owen lawes & customes. þe apostelis hadden  
 1 Cor. v. 5. þis power when a synful man was rebel aȝenst goddis lawe  
 to ȝeue þe fend power of his body to trauailen it, so þat  
 Prelates pretend þe soule were saaf. But owre prelatis han not þis power,  
 to slay the soul. þerfore þei feynen þat þei sleen þe soule bi þer cursyng  
 wanne þe bodi is neuere þe werse, & þanne þei techen lordis  
 and teach lords to enprisone þe bodi aftir fourti daies a cursyng, þou; þe  
 to imprison the body after forty days' curse. man be cursed<sup>1</sup> for holdyng' goddis hestis; & maken lordis  
 to ben turmentouris of cristene men, whanne þe fendis  
 doren not touche hem for drede of god. þis cursyng schulde  
 be suspendid for peril on alle sidis, and trewe techyng of

<sup>1</sup> blessed AA.

cristis gospel & holy ensaumplis of prelatiſ lif & manasyng  
of purgatorie & helle and confortyng of þe blisse of heuene  
schulde be schewed & regne among cristene peple; and þes  
foure schulden maken men to flee synne & lyue wel & ende  
in profit charite, & þis were best for alle parties.

### Capitulum 3<sup>m</sup>.

As to lawe, trewe men seyn þat þei willen mekely & wilfully drede & kepe goddis lawe vp here kunnyng & myȝt, & eche lawe of mannes makynge in as myche as þei witen þat it acordiþ wiþ goddis lawe & reson & good conscience & to þe riȝtful execucion þer-of; & god him self may bynde man no more to his owen lawe for his endeles riȝtwisnesse & charite þat he haþ to mannes soule. lord, where synful men þat ben antioſticiſ, & in caas deueliſ in fleſch & blood, may bynde men more to here wickid lawiſ & wrong execucions of hem þanne god wille bynde hem to his most riȝtful lawe & profitable. cristen men knowen wel of feiþ þat neiþer petir ne poul ne ony creature may do ouȝt lawefully aȝenst þe trewþe of holi writt ne aȝenst þe edificacion of holy chirche, þat is good techynge & gouernynge & amendynge of cristene souliſ. what power han þan worldly prelatiſ to make so many wickid lawes? siþ god curseþ hem þat maken wickid lawes, & comaundiþ þat no man schal adde to his wordiſ ne drawe fro hem vp payne of grete cursynge of god & dampnyng in helle. þat is to seiþ þat no man adde false sentence ne false glose to holy writt, for þan, as ierom seiþ, he is an heretik; and þat no man drawe ony treuþe fro goddis wordiſ, for þei enclosen alle nedeful treuþe & profitable for mannys soule. & to þis entente siþ poul in his pistel þat ȝif ony man, ȝee apostil or angel of Gal. 1. 8. heuene, preche oþer þing þan is tauȝte of crist & his aposteliſ  
<sup>1</sup>he is cursid. And Seint Jon seiþ,<sup>1</sup> in þe ende of þe apocalips, þat ȝif ony man adde þus to goddis wordiſ, god schal bryng vpon hym alle þe vengauces wryten in þe

True men will keep law as far as it agrees with God's law and conscience.

God bids that no man add to his words.

Rev. xxii. 18.

<sup>1-1</sup> omitted X.

\*[p. 29 MS.]

God's law enough  
to study.

apocalips, & þif ony man wiþdrawe þus fro goddis wordis.  
 \*god schal don hym out of þe bok of lif. ¶ Lord, siþ goddis  
 lawe is so myche & so hard to vndirstonde, as austyn &  
 oþere seyntis techen, þat þou; eche man hadde neuere so gret  
 witt & myȝtte lyue hool & sond in bodi & wittis til þe day  
 of dome, he schulde euere haue ynow; to lerne and occupie  
 him þerine at þe fulle, whi schulle wordly curatis &  
 prelatis<sup>1</sup> make so many bokis of here newe lawis for to  
 meyntene here pride & coueitise & worldly array? siþ men  
 be nowe of lesse wittis & schortere tyme & feblere of com-  
 plexion. certis þe chargen men ouer myȝt & maken hem  
 bysy to kunne wrongful tradiciouns of synful folis makynge  
 & to leue holy writt vnstudied, vnknoūd & vnkept; & þis is  
 a sotil cautel of þe fend to for-do goddis lawe & knowynge  
 & loue of oure goode god. And þerfore crist pleyneþ of þis  
 peple, bi þe prophete ysaie, & in þe gospel also, þat is peple  
 worschipiþ him in lippis but here herte is fer fro god, & þei  
 worschipen hym with-outen cause, for þei techen þe loris of  
 men & here maundementis. & þit seyntis in þe popis lawe  
 reprouen euyle lawis vngroundid in holy writt & reson, & hem  
 þat maken hem also, & seyn þat we owen to take hede what  
 crist seiþ, & to no man ellis but in also myche as he acordiþ  
 wiþ crist, & he his false þat seiþ or techen ony þing þat is  
 not euydently groundid in goddis lawe. & þerfore seynt  
 petyr comaundiþ þif ony speke, loke he speke as goddis wordis.  
 þus þes worldly prelatis drawen cristen men fro holy writt  
 þat is þe beste lawe & constreyne men to here owne lawis ful  
 of errour, maad to coloure here cursed pride & coueitise; for  
 þei ponysche men sorere for breken of here owen lawis þan  
 for brekyng of goddis lawe, & louen & chirischen men of  
 here lawe and dispisen & putten abac men of goddis lawe.  
 Late wordly prelatis ceesse to schlaundre pore men, seyng  
 þat þei wolen not obesche to here souereyns & dreden not  
 curs but dispise lawe. for in alle þes þre þei ben clere bifore  
 god & man þif riȝt & reson & charite be wel souȝt.

Isaiah xxix. 13.  
Matt. xv. 8, 9.

Saints in the  
pope's law bid us  
obey only Christ.

1 Peter iv. 11.

<sup>1</sup> X. inserts and.



## III.

## THE RULE AND TESTAMENT OF ST. FRANCIS.

THIS tract is distinguished among the many directed against the friars by its method of attack. The first and longer part consists merely in a translation of the rule by which the Franciscans admitted themselves bound, and the comment confines itself to pointing out how completely that rule was disregarded or evaded. The peculiar interest of the tract lies in its bringing before us how nearly in its idea the Franciscan order approached the body of poor priests, whom Wyclif sent out to preach. When the writer complains that at Rome "false menours" persecute those who would keep Francis' rule to the letter, we have an expression of the sympathy which we might have divined between the Lollards and the Spiritual Franciscans. (Cf. the Tract on the Leaven of Pharisees.) But before we have read to the end we find the author true to the "freedom of the gospel," which Wyclif consistently preached, declaring that no other order than Christ's is needed, since those who can carry out the highest and best life have that duty laid upon them by Christ's order to serve God with all their heart and all their strength. We may compare with this the saying (S. E. W. III. 452), "Every conseil of Crist is to sum man and sum tyme a precept."

I think that the author is Wyclif. The tract, *Fifty Heresies of Friars*, printed by Mr. Arnold (No. 24), seems like an amplification of this; and it is probably of later date, as the doctrine of transubstantiation is attacked there, but not mentioned here.

Copied from the Corpus MS. X, and collated with the Dublin MS. AA, and with the Oxford MS. W. All through W. has *þo* for *þe*; *hor* for *her*; *hom* for *hem*; and has the third person singular in *s*.

## SUMMARY.

The greater part of this tract is simply a translation from the Latin of the law laid down for the Franciscans by their founder. To this is added a short comment, pointing out—

- 1st. That the testament is binding upon Franciscans;
- 2nd. That the Franciscans keep neither rule nor testament, failing in obedience, in poverty, and in charity.

After this general statement of their faults comes an account of various ways in which they evade the letter of the rule. The tract ends with a declaration that no rule is of use except so far as it agrees with that laid down by Christ.

Þis his þe reule of seynt fraunseis.

### Capitulum primum.

The rule is to keep the gospel in obedience, poverty, and chastity.

Þe reule and þe lyuyng of frere menours is þis: to kepe þe holy gospel of oure lord ihū crist, lyuyng in obedience, wiþ-uten propre, & in chastitie. Frere fraunseis bihetiþ<sup>1</sup> obedience and reuerence to þe lord þe pope honorie, & to his successouris, þe whiche entren bi general & holy eleccion, & to þe chirche of rome, & be opere freris holden to obesche<sup>2</sup> to frere fraunseis & to his successouris.

Of hem þat wolen take þis lif, hou þei schullen be resceyued.

### Capitulum 2<sup>m</sup>.<sup>3</sup>

Any one desiring to enter the Order is to be examined by the provincial minister.

\*[p. 30 MS.]

He must have no wife or must dispose of her properly.

Must give away all his possessions.

Is to have a year of probation.

ʒif any wille take þis lif, & comen to oure breþeren, sende hem to þe mynystiris prouyncials, to whom only, & not to opere, be grauntid \* leue to resceyue freris. þerfore late þe mynystiris diligently examyne hem of þe comun feiþ and þe sacramentis of holy chirche, þat ʒif þei beleuen alle þes þingis, and wilen feþfully knowleche hem, & stedefastly kepe hem to þe ende of þe world, & ʒif þei han noon wyues, or ʒif þei han wyues & here wyues ben entrid in-to religion, or ellis þat here wyues han ʒouen here housbondis lyue<sup>4</sup> bi auctorite of þe bischop of þe diocise & now maad a vow of chastite or contynce, and here wyues ben of sich age þat noon euyl suspencion may be reysed of hem, late þe prouyncials seie to hem wordes of þe holi gospel þat þei goo & sille alle here goodis & ʒeue hem to pore men, & ʒif þei may not do þis here goode wille is ynow to hem; & be þe freris & here mynystiris war þat þei be not bisi of here temporal goodis, þat þei don freli of here þingis what euere þe lord inspiriþ<sup>5</sup> to hem. ¶ Neþeles ʒif conseil be nedful her-to, haue þe mynystiris leue to sende hem to summe men þat dreden god, bi whos conseil here goodis schullen be ʒouen to pore men. afterward graunte þe mynystiris to hem cloþis of probacion, þat is to<sup>6</sup> seie tweie<sup>7</sup> cotis or kirtlis wiþ-uten hood and a girdil & a brech & a chaperon to þe girdel, but ʒif opere þing after god be seyn to ye mynystiris. ¶ But whanne þe ʒeer of probacion is endid be þei resceyued to obedience, bihetyng to kepe þis lif & reule; & in no manere schal it

<sup>1</sup> behetis W.

<sup>2</sup> obesche X.

<sup>3</sup> In W. this is reckoned as part of Chapter I.

<sup>4</sup> for X.

<sup>5</sup> leue W.

<sup>6</sup> enpropriþ X.; inspiraverit Lat.

<sup>7</sup> omitted X.

<sup>8</sup> two W.

be leffel to hem to goo out of þis ordre vp<sup>1</sup> þe comaundement of þe lord þe pope, for aftir þe holy gospel no man sendynge his hond to þe plow; and lokenge a-ȝen is able to þe kyngdom of god. & haue þei þat han bihiȝt obedience cotis or kirtlis<sup>2</sup> wiþ an hood and an oþer wiþouten<sup>3</sup> hood; þei þat wilen haue schon & be nedid þer-to may bere hem. ¶ And be alle freris cloþid wiþ foule cloþis, & þei may pese hem aȝen or cloute hem of sacchis & oþere pecis wiþ þe blissing of god. And I moneste & stire þes freris þat þei dispise not and deme not þo men whom þei seen cloþid wiþ softe cloþis & colourid, & vse delicat metis & drynkis, but more eche of hem deme & dispise him self.

Once fully admitted no one may leave the Order.

All friars to wear foul clothes and mend them with sacks.

Of goddis seruyce & fastyngys, & hou freris schullen go bi þe world.

### ‘Capitulum 3<sup>m</sup>.‘

Do clerkis deuyñ officis<sup>4</sup> after þe ordre of þo<sup>5</sup> holy chirche of rome, out taken þe sautir, of wheche þei may haue breuyaries, þat is smale sauteris or abreggid; but late lewid freris seie four & twenti pater nostris for matynes, for laudis fyue, for prime, tierce, vndren & noon, for eche of hem seuene pater nostris, & for euen-song twelue, & for compleyn seuene. ¶ And preie þei for dede men. and faste þei \*fro þe feste of alle hawen<sup>6</sup> til þe natyuyte of crist, & þo<sup>6</sup> holy lenten þat bygynneþ fro þe twelþe day of cristemasse to þe fulle fourti daies, þe whiche lenten oure lord halwid wiþ þis holy fast, be þei blissed of þe lord þat<sup>7</sup> fasten wilfully þis lenten; & be þei not constreyned þat wilen not, but faste þei an oþer lenten til þe resurreccious of þe lord. but in oþere tymes ben þei not holden to faste but on þe friday; but in tyme of opyn nede ben þe freris not bounden to bodily fast. but I conseile, amoneste, and stire my freris in oure lord ihū crist<sup>10</sup> whanne þei gon bi þe world þat þei chide not and stryue not bi wordis, & þat þei iuge not oþere men, but þat þei ben mylde, peisble and manerly, homly & meke, spekyng of al þingis as it is semely. & þat þei schullen not ride but ȝif þei ben nedid for opyn nede or siknesse. ¶ In-to what euere hous þei schullen entre seie þei first, pees be to þis hous, & aftir þe holy gospel be it lefful to hem to ete of alle metis þat ben sett to hem, as I haue seid.

Clerks to say their offices except that they may use abridged psalters.

Laymen to say 76 paternosters dally.

Rules as to fasting.

[p. 31 MS.]

Friars to behave peaceably when abroad.

<sup>1</sup> upon W.

<sup>2</sup> coote or kirtel W.

<sup>3</sup> wiþ an out X. and AA.

<sup>4</sup> cap<sup>m</sup>. ij<sup>m</sup>. W.; omitted X.

<sup>5</sup> office W.

<sup>6</sup> omitted X. and AA.

<sup>7</sup> halowe W.

<sup>8</sup> omitted X. and AA.

<sup>9</sup> & X.

<sup>10</sup> þan X.

þat Freris resceyuen no money.

Capitulum 4<sup>m.</sup><sup>1</sup>

No friar to receive money or pence directly or indirectly.

I comaunde stedefastly to alle freris þat in no manere þei resceyue no money or pens; neiþer bi hem self ne mene,<sup>2</sup> persone putt bitwixe. neþeles for þe nede of sike men & to cloþe oþer freris bi gostly frendis only, þe mynystrys & custodis schullen bere bisy cure, vpe placis & tymes & colde regiouns or contres; as þei schulle see þat it is spedý to here nedy. þat þis þing be euermore saaf, þat as it is seid þei resceyue no pens ne money.

Of þe manere of trauayle of freris.

Capitulum 5<sup>m.</sup><sup>3</sup>

Friars to avoid idleness.

Oure freris to whom god haþ þouen grace to trauaile, labore þei treuly & deuoutly so þat ydelnesse enemy of soule be excludid or putt away. And þei quenche not þe spirit of holy deuocion and preire to whiche oþer spiritual<sup>4</sup> þingis schullen serue. But of þe hire of labour receyue þei necessities for hem self & here breþeren wiþ-outen pens or mony, and þat mekely, as it is semyng to seruauantis of god foloweris of þe moste holy pouert.

þat freris aproþren no þing to hem self, & hou þei schullen axe almes, & of sike freris.

Capitulum 6<sup>m.</sup><sup>5</sup>

Friars may own nothing.

Freris schulle no þing aproþre to hem self neiþer hous ne place ne ony oþer þing, but as pilgrimes & gestis or comelyngyns in þis world, in pouert & mekenesse seruyng to þe lord, goo þei tristiliche for almes, and hem nedih not to be a-schamyd, for oure 'lord made hymself pore in þis world' for vs. þis is þe heynesse of þe moste hey; pouert, þat makih þou my breþeren heiris & kyngis of þe kyngdom of heuenys; þis haþ maad þou \*pore in þingis & enhaunsed þou in vertues. be þis þoure porcion, or deel, þat bryngih þerfitely to þe lond of lyuynge men. to þe whiche pouert þe most loued breþeren, hooliche cleuyng for þe reuerence of oure lord ihū crist, wile þe noþing haue lastinge þe world vnder heuene. And where euere freris ben & fynden hem to-gidre schewe þei hem homly bitwixe hem self, & sikyrly schewe eche to oþer his nede. for ȝif a modir norscheþ & loueþ here fleschly child, wiþ hou mychel more diligence schal on loue

\*[p. 32 MS.]

All friars to be friendly together.

<sup>1</sup> cap<sup>m</sup>. iij<sup>m</sup>. W.

<sup>2</sup> So in all MSS. The Latin has 'temporalia.'

<sup>3</sup> none X.

<sup>4</sup> y<sup>m</sup>. W.

<sup>5</sup> 4<sup>m</sup>. W.

<sup>6</sup> omitted X.

& norische his gostly broþer, & ȝif ony of hem falle in-to sike-  
nesse oþere freris schullen serue hym as þei wolden be seruyd.

Of penaunce to be putt to freris for synnes.

### Capitulum 7<sup>m.1</sup>

ȝif ony of freris bi tisyng of þe enemye happen to synne  
deedly þe synnes of whiche it is ordeyned among freris þat  
þei rennen to here mynystre prouyncial, þe same freris ben  
holden to renne to hem also sone as þei may wiþ-uten  
dwellyng. & þo mynystre ȝif þei ben prestis schullen wiþ  
mercy enyone hen penaunce, & ȝif þei ben noone prestis  
make þei to be enyoyned to hem bi oþer freris of þe ordre,  
as it semeþ to spede most aftir god. & þei schullen be war  
þat þei be not wraþid and disturblid for þe synne of ony, for  
wraþe & disturbyng letten charite in hem & oþere.

Provincial minis-  
ters to enjoin  
penance for great  
sins.

Of þe chesyng of þe general mynystre &<sup>2</sup> of þe  
prouyncial chapitris of þe ordre.

### Capitulum 8<sup>m.3</sup>

Be alle freris holden to haue euermore on of þe freris of  
þis religion a general mynystre & seruaunt of al þe breþerhed,  
& be þei holden to obliche stedfastly to him. & whanne  
he dieþ þe chesyng of his successour be maad<sup>4</sup> of mynistris  
prouncial & custodis in þe chapitre of witsontide, in whiche  
chapitre be þe<sup>1</sup> mynystre prouyncial holden euermore to  
come to-gidre, where eu<sup>5</sup> it haþ<sup>6</sup> ben ordeyned of þe general  
mynystre; & onys in þre ȝeer, or at anoþere terme lasse or  
more as it is ordeyned of þe forseid mynystre. & ȝif it seme  
ony tyme to þe generalte of mynystre prouyncial & custodis  
þat þe forseide mynyster is not sufficient to þe seruyce  
& comune profite of freris, be þe forseide freris<sup>7</sup> holden,  
to whom þe chesyng is ȝouen, to chese hem anoþer in þe  
name of god to here kepere. Aftir þe chapitre of witsonday  
þe mynystre & custodis may eche bi hem self, ȝif þei wilen  
& it seme to hem spedeful, in þe same ȝeer in here custodies  
onys clepe<sup>7</sup> to-gidre here breþeren to chapitre.

Choice of the  
general of the  
Order.

Holding of  
general chapter.

Of prechours to þe puple.

### Capitulum 9<sup>m.8</sup>

Preche not freris in þe bischopriche of ony bischop whanne  
þe bischop aȝen seiþ hym, & noon of freris be hardy in ony  
manere to preche to þe peple but ȝif he be examyned &  
sprouyd of þe mynystre of þis fraternyte, & þat þe office

Friars not to  
preach within  
the diocese of  
any bishop  
against his will.

<sup>1</sup> vijm. W.

<sup>6</sup> hit has W.

<sup>2</sup> omitted X.

<sup>6-6</sup> omitted X.

<sup>3</sup> vijm. W.

<sup>7</sup> calle W.

<sup>4-4</sup> omitted X.

<sup>8</sup> vijm. W.

\*[p. 33 MS.] of *prechyng* be graunted to hym of þe \*mynystre. ¶ Also I moonest & stire þe same freris þat in *prechyng* þat þei maken here spechis be examyned as chast & to profit & to edificacion of þe peple. Schewyng to hem vices & vertues, peyne & glorie, wiþ schortnesse of sermon. for þe lord haþ<sup>1</sup> maad abreggid word vpon þe erþe.

Of þe monestyng & of correccioun.

### Capitulum 10<sup>m</sup>.<sup>2</sup>

Officers to rule mildly,

and friars to be obedient.

Freris þat ben mynystris & seruantis of oþere freris schullen visite and moneste here breþeren mekely & charitably, & þei schullen correcte, not commandyng to hem ony þing þat be aȝenst here soule and oure<sup>3</sup> reule. And freris þat ben soget owen to þenke þat for god þei han forsaken here owen willes; werfore I comaunde stedfastly to hem þat þei obeche to here<sup>4</sup> mynystris in alle þingis þat þei han behiȝt to oure lord to kepe, & noon contrarie þingis to here soule & to oure reule. & where euere ben ony freris þat wisten or knewen þat þei may not kepe gostly þe reule þei may & owen to renne to here mynystris, & þe mynystris owe to resceyue hem benygely & bi charite, and haue þei so muche famularite, or homlynesse, aboute hem þat þei may seie<sup>5</sup> to hem & do as lordis to here seruantis. for whi so it schal be, þat mynystris be seruantis of alle freris. I amoneste & stire in oure lord ihū crist þat freris ben war & flee fro alle pride, fro veyn glorie, enuye and coueitise, & cure & bisynesse of þis world, fro detraccion & gruechyng. & recke not þat<sup>6</sup> þei ben vnkunnyng to lerne letteris, but vnderstonde þei þat aboute alle thingis þei owen to desire to haue þe spirit of þe lord & his holy werchyng, and euere preie to god wiþ clene herte, & haue mekenesse & pacience in pursuyt & in infirmyte, and to loue hem þat pursuen vs & reprouen & dispisen vs. for oure lord seiþ: loue þe þoure enemyes, & preien for hem þat pursuen þou, and for men þat falsly chalengen þow. blissed be þei þat suffren persecucion for riȝtwisnesse, for here is þe kyngdom of heuenys; & who euere lastiþ in-to þe ende he schal be saaf.

þat freris entre not in-to abbeies of nunnes.

### Capitulum 11<sup>m</sup>.<sup>7</sup>

Friars not to enter nunneries,

I comaunde stably to freris þat þei haue not suspect companyes or conseilis of wymmen, & þat þei entren not þe abbeies of nunnes, out take þo to whom fro þe see of apostaille is

<sup>1</sup> haad X.

<sup>2</sup> see X.; ut dicere possint Lat.

<sup>3</sup> ix<sup>m</sup>. W.

<sup>4</sup> hor W.

<sup>5</sup> omitted X.

<sup>6</sup> þo W.

<sup>7</sup> x<sup>m</sup>. W.

licence grauntid; and be þei not maad godfadrís of men, nor to act as last bi þis occasion among frerís & of frerís be gendrid <sup>godfathers.</sup> ~~scelaundre.~~

Of þe manere of goynge among sarasyns & oþere men  
out of bileue.

### Capitulum 12<sup>m.1</sup>

Who euere of frerís bi inspiracioun of god wilen goon <sup>Missionaries to</sup> among sarasyns & oþere vnbelefful, axe þei leue þerof of <sup>have the sanction</sup> here mynystris prouynceyal, and ȝeue þes mynystris to noon <sup>of the provincial</sup> leue to go but to hem whom þei seen ablee to be sent to þis þing. I enyoine to mynystris bi obedience þat þei axe of þe lord þe pope on of þe cardynales of þe \*chirche of <sup>[p. 34 MS.]</sup> rome, þat be gouernour, meyntenour, and correctour of þis fraternyte, þat we be euere suget to þe feet of þe same holy chirche, and stable in general feiþ of cristene men, & þat we kepe pouert & mekenesse & þe holy gospel of oure lord ihū crist, þe whiche we han stedefastly bi-hiȝt or awowid bi profession.

Here endiþ þe reule of seynt fraunseis, & here bigynneþ þe testament of seynt fraunseis.

### Capitulum 13<sup>m.2</sup>

In þe name of þe fadir & sone & þe holy gost. Amen. <sup>Testament of</sup> Houre lord haþ ȝouen to me fraunseis to bigynne to do <sup>St. Francis.</sup> penaunce; & whanne I was in ouere myche synnes it semyd to me bittre to see leprous men, and þe same lord brouȝte <sup>His dealings with</sup> me among hem and I dede mercy wiþ hem. & wanne I <sup>lepers.</sup> departed fro hem þat þing þat was semyng bitter to me was turned to me in-to swetnesse of soule & bodi. & afterward I stood a litel and wente out of þe world, & oure lord ȝaf me sich feiþ in chirchis þat I schulde preie þus sympli & seie: we worschipe þe, lord ihū crist; at alle þe chirchis þe wiche ben in al þe world, and we blissen to þe for by þyn holy crois þu hast aȝen bouȝt þe world.

¶ Afterward þe lord ȝaf to me & ȝeueþ so myche feiþ þat <sup>His respect for</sup> I wille renne to þe prestis þat lyuen aftir þe forme of þe <sup>priests,</sup> chirche of rome for þe ordeynynge of hem, al-þou; þei diden to me persecucion. & þou; I hadde as myche wisdom as hadde salamon & I founde litel pore prestis of þis world þat dwellen in parichis I wille not preche aȝenst here wille. and I<sup>3</sup> wille honoure alle prestis as my lordis, & I wile not biholde in hem any synne, fore in hem I

<sup>1</sup> xj<sup>m</sup>. W.    <sup>2</sup> Testamentum francisci W.    <sup>3</sup> omitted X. and AA.

take bi discrecion goddis sone & þei ben my lordis. & here-fore I do þat I see noo bodily þing in this world of hym, þe heigest goddis sone, but his holieste bodi & blood þat þei reseyuen & þei only mynystren to opere. & I wile abouen alle þingis honoure þes holieste preuytes or mysteries, & putte þes holieste names in most precious places, & where euere I fynde his wordis writen in vnleffful placis I wile gedre & preie þat þei ben gedrid & kepte<sup>1</sup> in an honeste place. & we schal worschipe in herte & word alle clerkis of dyuynyte þat mynystren to vs most holy wordis as hem þat mynystren to vs þe holy gost & lif. And after þat þe lord hadde þouen to me of freris no man schewid to me what I schulde do, but he þat is hijest schewid to me þat I schulde lyue after þe forme of þe gospel: & I in fewe wordis & sympliche maade to write it, & þe lord pope confermyd it to me. And summe comen<sup>2</sup> to taken þis lif, And þei þauen to pore men alle þinges þat þei myȝten. And þei weren \*apeied wiȝ o cote or kirtil with-ynne forþe & with-out forþ & wolde not haue more. clerkis schulden seie here officis aftir clerkis, but lewed freris schulde seie þe pater noster. and we dwelten to-gidre in chirchis, & weren idiotis, & vnderloute to ale men. & I traueiled wiȝ myn hondis & wile traueile, & I<sup>3</sup> wile þat alle opere freris traueile in labour þe whiche þertyneþ to honeste, & þei þat kunnen not, lerne þei; not for coneitise to take hire, but for ensample to putte away idelnesse; & whanne men þeuen vs nouȝt renne we to þe borde of þe lord, axynge almes fro dore to dore.

from whom he  
receives Christ  
in the sacrament.

How the Order  
was formed.

\*[p. 35 MS.]

Friars to receive  
nothing; not  
even churches  
nor dwelling-  
places.

Friars are on no  
account to get  
letters from the  
court of Rome.

Any friar who  
breaks the Rule  
or is a heretic

¶ God schewid to me þis salutacion þat I schulde seie, þe lord þeue pees to þe, þerfor be freris war þat þei reseyue not in no<sup>4</sup> manere, neiþer chirchis, ne placis to dwellen onne, ne ony oper þingis þat ben bilded for hem, but as it semeþ holy pouert, þe whiche we han bi-fore seid in þe reule, euermore dwellynge þere as gestis & comelyngis & pilgrymys. I comaunde sadly to alle freris be obedience þat where so euere þei ben be þei not chargid<sup>5</sup> to axe ony lettre in þe court of rome, neiþer be hem self ne by mene persone put bitwyxe, wiȝ þe blissyng of god. And I wile þat freris obeche to þe general mynystre of þis fraternyte whom it plesed to me to þeue þerto, and I wile þat I be so taken in his hondis þat I may not goo or do aȝenst his obedience & his wille, for he is my lord. & þou; I be simpul<sup>6</sup> & sik nepeles I wile euere haue a clerk þat schal do me dyuynne office after þe reule. And þo þat ben founden þat don not þe office after þe reule & wilen varie on oper manere & be not

<sup>1</sup> be putt W.

<sup>4</sup> any W.

<sup>2</sup> omitted X. and AA.

<sup>5</sup> hardy X.

<sup>3</sup> omitted X. and AA.

<sup>6</sup> sinful AA.; Latin simplex.



of ryȝt cristen feiȝ, be alle freris holden bi obedience where euere þei ben þat, where euere þei schulle fynde ony of þoo, þei schullen presenten hym to þe nexte custode of þat place where euere þei fynden sychon. and be þat custode holde sadly bi obedience to kepe hym strongly as a man in bondis day & nyȝt, so þat he may not be delyuerid of his hond til he represente hym <sup>1</sup>in his owen persone in þe hondis of his mynystre, and be þe mynystre holden sadly bi obedience to holde hym bi freris þat kepe men nyȝt & day as in bondis til þat he represente hym to þe <sup>1</sup>cardynal hostiense, þat is lord, *gouernour*, *meyntenour* & *corectour* of alle þe *fraternyte*.

And seie not, freris, þat þis is another reule: for it is a remembraunce, amonestyng, a reprouyng, and my testament þe whiche I frere fraunseis, litel, make to my blissed breþeren, þat for þis <sup>2</sup>we kepe bettere þe reule þe whiche we han biȝt to þe lord. & þe general mynystre & alle oþere mynystris & custodes ben holden bi obedience to \* adde no þing to þes wordis ne drawe þer fro & rede þei þes wordis.

This is not a fresh rule.

\*[p. 36 MS.]

And I comaunde bi obedience to alle my breþeren, boþe clerkis & lewid, þat þei putte not glosis vnto þe reule, ne seyng wiþ þes wordis: "so þei wilen be vnderstonen," but as þe lord ȝaf to me sympliche and pureliche to seie & to write þe reule; and vnderstonde ȝe þes wordis so symplely and clenly with-oute glose & kepe ȝe hem in to þe ende wiþ holy werchyng. and who euere kepȝ þis be he fulfillid in heuene with þe blissyng of þe heigest fadir, and be he fulfillid in erþe with þe blissyng of his louyd sone, wiþ þe holiest gost confortour, & wiþ alle vertues of heuenes and wiþ alle seyntis; and I frere fraunseis, ȝoure litel and ȝoure seruant, conferme to ȝou how euere myche I may wiþ-in & wiþ-uten þis moste holy blissyng. Amen.

The rule to be obeyed literally.

Here endiþ þe testament of seynt fraunseis.<sup>3</sup>

### [Comment.]

But here þe menours seyn þat þe pope dischargȝ hem of þis testament & seiþ þat þei ben not holden þer-to, for a man haþ not lordschipe ne iurisdiccio[n] vpon his pere, & siþ þe pope was more þan fraunseis he myȝtte not bynde þe pope þat he ne myȝte dispense & reproue what he wolde. ¶ But to þis trewe men seyn þus, þat freris ben bounden to þis testament for many skillis: first fraunseis seiþ þat god schewid hym

The minors say that they are dispensed by the pope from obeying this testament, and that the pope is above Francis.

Reasons why they are bound to this.

<sup>1</sup> omitted W.

<sup>2</sup> omitted X. and AA.

<sup>3</sup> Finis testamenti W.

his lyuyng and not man; þanne oþer þis testament is of goddis wille or fraunseis is fals þat seiþ so. ȝif it be goddis wille þe pope may not do aȝenst it, ȝif fraunseis be false in þis seiynge his doynge cam of þe fend<sup>1</sup> of helle þat is fadir of lesyngis. ¶ Also fraunseis seiþ þat þis testament is noon oþer reule but þe firste, and þanne as þei taken þe firste reule so moste þei take þe testament, siþþen þei ben al oon. ¶ Also it semiþ þat fraunseis in his laste daies schulde beste knowe þe treuþe & most be in charite to his breþeren, & þan he made þis testament; & herefore it semeþ þat he was a liere & out of charite but ȝif þis testament were acordynge wiþ goddis dom; but what pope or deuyl<sup>2</sup> schulde þanne distroie it? ¶ Also men seyn þat he is cursed þat lettij þe riȝtful wille of a dede man. But þis testament is riȝtful wille of dede fraunseis; þanne it semiþ þat þat pope þat lettij it & þe freris also ben acursed of god, of fraunseis, and of alle hawen.

They forsake the obedience of God, and obey a sinful idiot.

¶ As to þe substance of the reule þei forsaken obedience of god and obeschen to a synful idiot biddynge þe contrarie of goddis wille, þe whiche synful ydiot is in cas a dampnyd deuyl, & so for plesynge of þe world or lustis of here flech þei leuen þe comaundementis of god & don vnriȝtful comaundement of þe fend, & magnyflen more obedience to synful men, & in caas to fendis, þan obedience \*to crist þat is euere more medeful; & so þei seyn þat a good þing doon after þe comaundement of god is not of so gret merijt as a þing don after þe comaundement of a synful ydiot, & in cas a dep deuyl in helle. but þis newe profession was not vsed of crist & his apostelis but in þe time þat sathanas was vnbounden, as þe apcalips tellij; and so it semiþ þat þes newe ordris distroien obedience of cristis lawe (bi whiche eche man is holden obeche to oþer in þe drede of crist, þat is in as myche as ony techij a noþer to don þe wille of god) & magnyfie obedience to synful men, ȝee aȝenst þe preceptis of god. and so as myche as is in hem þei maken a synful idiot & in cas a dampnyd deuyl in helle more than almyȝti

\*[p. 37 MS.]

This profession came in only when Satan was unbound.

<sup>1</sup> deuyl W.

<sup>2</sup> ordeyned W.

god in trinite, for þei don more aftir his false comaundement þan aftir comaundement of almyȝty god.

¶ To þe secunde part of þe reule wiþ-uten proprete of worldly goodis; siþ propre þing stondiþ most in wille & þei traueilen more for propre worschipe or wynnynge þan for comune profit of cristen men, it semeþ þei don alle aȝenst þis reule; for þei han grete housis propriid to hem self, many costly bokis, & myche hid tresour biried in here houses fro þe comune of cristen men lyuyng in þe world bi gret labor, as god enyoyned adam; & þis tresour is kept proprely to idel men or fendis, siþþen it is geten by false lesyngis, false beggyng, & fals meyntenynge of foule synnes. ¶ Also

As to the rule which forbids them to hold property, they break it in many ways.

o strong beggere or flaterere haþ a chaumber for a lord, erl or duk wiþ many preciousse iuellis, & anoþer frere haþ nakid sidis & many other myscheues þou; he be worþ siche a þousand bifore god. ¶ As to chastite deme men of here bodily chastite, but of gostly chastite it semeþ þat þei ben alle avouteris, for þei halde religious þat is maad of synful men better þan religion maad of crist hym self, & þei chargen more tradicions or customes maad of here owen errouris þan þe iust lawis & heste maad of almyȝty god, & þus is gostely matrimonye bitwixe crist & cristen mennus soulis broken, siþ it stondiþ in riȝtfulnesse & mercy & feiþ.

Their rich chambers.

¶ But see now hou freris don openly aȝenst þis reule & testament. also in takynge money many weies; for þei leden wiþ hem a scarioth stolen fro is eldris by þefte to robbe pore men bi beggyng dampnyd of goddis lawe. & seen more ypocrisie of hem: þei wolen telle gold and money & touche it wiþ a sticke or wiþ gloues & a grete cuppe of gold or pece of siluer worþ many markis to drynke noble wyn of, but þei wilen not touche an halpeny or ferþing wiþ þe coyn & armes of þe cros & of the kyng, & þis semeþ for dispit of þe cros or of þe kyng, for a weeg of siluer<sup>1</sup> or a \*cuppe of gold þei wolen handil faste, and þe money þat þei robben of pore men bi fals beggyng þei wolen leyn it

They take money in many ways.

They lead with them an Iscariot.

They will count money with a stick,

but will not touch a half-penny with the bare hand.

[p. 38 MS.]

<sup>1</sup> gold W.

They wear rich  
clothing.

vndir here beddis hed at nyȝt. & so of cloþing þei don  
aȝenst þis reule in many maneres; for men seen þat þe  
kyng or þe emperour myȝtte wiþ worschipe were a garnement  
of a frere for goodnesse of þe cloþ, & namely of suche freris  
as schulden most kepe pouert of crist & his apostelis, as  
ben clepid maistris of diuynyte, but verreily maistris of  
errour boþe in techynge & in ensauple, & summe oone haþ  
wast cloþis & costi, and a noþer symple frere þat nys not  
so gret flaterere nakid or to rent. ¶ As to propre þingis freris  
seyn þat þe pope is lord worldly of housis, bokis, iewelis

They slander the  
pope.

and al þat þei han, but her semeþ myche venym: first þe  
euyll children putten in-to here fadir þe pope þe venym of  
worldly lordschipe siþ þei may not haue it for distroynge  
of here perfeccioun, & yit þei seyn þat þe pope mot be most  
holy & p̄fyt & nexte sue crist in alle manere vertues, &  
þus þei putten a veyn þorn in his feet. As to here kyng

They are untrue  
to the king.

þei ben vnkynde & vntrewe, for wiþ-uten his leue<sup>1</sup> or is  
conseil þei alien in-to straunge<sup>2</sup> rewmes, & in caas to oure  
enemyes, al þat þei may gete bi robberie of pore men<sup>3</sup> &  
flaterynge & oþere false menes in þe lond þat þei dwelliþ  
inne; & so, ȝif þe pope ben enemye to oure lond & sende  
enemyes to oure lond, he haþ many stronge houses as  
caastelis; & ȝif þei ben his riȝtfully oure kyng may not  
warne ne lette his hoste to reste in þo places, & þanne is oure  
lond in gret peril. ¶ As anemtis p̄schynge, men knowen wel  
þat freris wile flater & spare to reprove scharply synnes  
of grete men for drede of los of worldly goodis or frendischipe  
or fauour; & so for loue of here stynkyng bely þei laten þe  
fend strangle many<sup>4</sup> soulis, and ȝit dispisen and letten oþere  
men to preche the treuþe of goddis lawe, laste here synne  
were knowen & here pride & worldly wynnyng leid a doun.

They spare to  
reprove great  
men.

¶ And ȝit þei tellen not schortly ne plenerly<sup>5</sup> þe gospel, & vices  
& vertues, & peynes and ioie, but maken longe talis of fablis,  
or cronycelis, or comenden here owen nouelries. ¶ As anemtis

<sup>1</sup> love X.

<sup>2</sup> stronge X. and AA.

<sup>3</sup> omitted X. and AA.

<sup>4</sup> mennus W.

<sup>5</sup> pleynely W.

traueile of freris it is knowen hou þei gon ydel fro contre to contre, & fro toun to toun, & fro hous to hous, beggyng nedles of pore men, techynge oþere to ben idel, & stelen mennus children to þis ydelnesse, where þei ben tauȝt to lyue in swet of here body bi comaundement of god and bi here owen reule & by ensauple of petir and poule; whanne petir fischid aftir cristis resurreccion, & poul traueillid \* wiþ his hondis aftir cristis ascencion; and seynt austyn techiþ munkis to labore wiþ here hondis, & so doþ seynt benet & seynt bernard. ¶ Also bisiden rome frere menours bi false name pursuen trewe pore freris to deþ, for as myche as þei wolden kepe fraunseis reule to þe lettere in pouert & mekenesse & in grete penaunce, & þerfore, þou; þei haue name of franseis freris, þei ben enemys of crist & fraunseis & cruel man-sleeris. ¶ Also, ȝif fraunseis take only þe gospel and no þing addiþ<sup>1</sup> of his owne þer-to, it schulde not be clepid<sup>2</sup> fraunseis reule but reule of crist or of þe gospel; & ȝif he putte to þe gospel of his owne fyndynge, whi schulde he make þer-of a newe ordre, siþ þe ordre þat crist made him self is most perfit & most liȝt & most siker to geten heuene by, & what goode dede ony man may doo he is holden to don it bi þis most comaundement of god: "þou schalt loue þi lord þi god of ale þin herte, of al þi lif, of al þi þouȝtis, & of al þi stengþes or myȝtis." what nede is it þanne to make anoþer religion, siþ þat þat crist made is I-now; at þe fulle; & so siþ noone apostle of crist ne angel of heuene haþ ony power but ȝif it be to edificacion & profit of holy chirche, þe pope haþ no<sup>3</sup> power to dispense aȝenst fraunseis testament & his reule, siþ þei ben al on, but ȝif it be to profit of holy chirche þat men kepen neiþer his reule ne his testament. Of þis reule & errour myȝte men speke ful myche. But god for his mercy brynge clerkis to cristis clene<sup>4</sup> religion, siþ it is þe beste on alle weies & most profitable to alle parties. Amen.

Instead of working they live in idleness.

[p. 39 MS.]

They persecute the true (i.e. the spiritual) franciscans.

God's order bids us do every good thing we can.

<sup>1</sup> asdiþ X.    <sup>2</sup> calde W.    <sup>3</sup> omitted X. and AA.    <sup>4</sup> trewe X. and AA.

## IV.

## OF PRELATES.

THIS tract is less orderly in arrangement and fuller of repetition than is usual in Wyclif's work, but some parts of it are worthy of him, and it contains no opinions that are not to be found in his genuine writings. There is a great resemblance between this and the tract on the office of Curates, No. VII. Both have references to the Crusade in Flanders, and are therefore late works of Wyclif, if his at all; while both of them are silent as to his doctrine of the Eucharist, and are comparatively mild in their language as to the Friars, who are not treated as at all worse than the monks. This would be natural enough in Wyclif's earlier years, but is not in accordance with his usual tone after 1380. I incline to think that they were written by an intimate disciple rather than by the master.

As to evidence of date, I have little doubt that the mention of "anticrists bullis to maken cristene men to werre with each othere" (p. 73), and of pardons granted "to make discensioun & werris" (p. 82) refer to Spencer's Crusade, although it is just possible that they may point to one of the other occasions on which popes have encouraged bloodshed.

The tone as to persecution is uncertain. The passage (p. 87) "prisonen hem and slen hem *algates in wille*" looks as if the infliction of death for heresy was not yet allowed. There is stronger language in the Sermons and the Trialogus. Yet we are told on p. 79, that lords who support poor priests are cursed and taken to prison "if thei stonden sadde in goddis cause." This may have happened in Wyclif's time, merely as the result of excommunication, but I know no instance of it. Were the tract written much after his death, its tone would probably be fiercer.

I cannot identify the "litel harlot" who "dispiseth the pope and stroieth his lordship," p. 83.

Copied from the Corpus MS. X. and collated with the Dublin MS. AA.

A leaf is wanting in AA. from end of Chapter XLII. to the early part of Chapter XLIII. "for his entier sorwe of synne."

## SUMMARY.

CHAP. I. Prelates are bound to preach, since they take the place of apostles whom Christ ordered to preach. Examples and warnings from Scripture. Wickedness of neglect. Prelates more bound to preach than the people to pay tithes. Duty of making them amend.

- CHAP. II. Prelates will not allow priests to preach without their licence. They permit the new religious to go about preaching lies and fables, but it is on condition that they do not preach against the sins of prelates, and that they pay largely from the money which they extort.
- III. Prelates are heretics, for by their life they set an example of living against Christ's law. Their pomp, litigiousness, luxury and covetousness.
- IV. Prelates rob the king's lieges by taking money for licences to sin. They bribe nobles and jurors to support them, but curse all who try to correct them.
- V. Prelates come to their benefices by simony. Nature of simony. Its prevalence. Common forms of it. Worst in the Court of Rome, and most harmful. Condemnation of simony in Scripture. It is a heresy. Bishops, friars, and curates alike guilty of it.
- VI. Prelates think more of the consecration of churches and ornaments than of consecrating the sacrament of the altar, which they leave to every priest, while they keep the others for themselves. They use these offices as a means of extortion.
- VII. Prelates teach man's law, but hinder preaching of the gospel. Prayer to God to give courage to his servants, and understanding to lords.
- VIII. Prelates care more for money than for men's souls. Witness the sinners.
- IX. Prelates live in lechery and lead others into sin. They raise money from poor men, who want it to live on. They publish bulls to encourage wars. They allow friars to go about begging. Thus they kill men's souls.
- X. Prelates lay more stress on their own curse than on God's. They enforce their excommunication by imprisonment. For real sins they sell absolution, but they put true preachers under curse, and condemn them by false witness.
- XI. Prelates deceive men by their false prayers and singing. Prayer without good life useless. God only knows the worth of each man's prayer. Prayers of wicked men are not made useful by the virtue of the Church. If they cannot pray effectively for themselves, neither can they for others.
- XII. Prelates frighten men by their excommunications; forbid true preachers, and persecute those who would support them.
- XIII. Prelates deceive men by indulgences, which have no authority from Christ, and are useless except as a means of extortion. Pardon is wholly in God's hands.
- XIV. Prelates make the way to heaven harder by their new laws. They add also new points to the Creed; as the headship of the pope.
- XV. Prelates exalt themselves above Christ; for he told men to judge him by his deeds, and they say their subjects should not judge them.
- XVI. Prelates stop men from doing God's will, as in saying mass and preaching. They pretend it is to stop heresy, but they are not true judges of heresy, for they neither know nor keep God's law.
- XVII. Prelates refuse obedience and taxes to secular lords. Christ paid tribute to the Emperor. Much more should they who are rich help the land. They set example of rebellion.
- XVIII. Prelates worse than Jews, for they persecute Christ in his members and take blood-money.

- CHAP. XIX. Avarice of prelates, their litigiousness, oppression; their pomp and warlike ways.
- XX. Prelates teach other men to maintain them in their sins and to persecute poor priests.
- XXI. Prelates set more store by their own laws than by the gospel.
- XXII. Prelates teach that nothing in the church is lawful that is not confirmed by the pope, who is commonly the worst of prelates and antichrist.
- XXIII. Prelates are enemies of peace, counselling war to divert attention<sup>d</sup> from their own sins. Besides advising it, they take part in it.
- XXIV. The worldly and pompous life of prelates an ill example.
- XXV. Money sent out of the realm to bring preferment and to maintain suits at Rome.
- XXVI. Prelates by their invention of new laws declare Christ's laws to be insufficient, and so slander Christ.
- XXVII. Prelates make men assent to their false teaching, and deceive lords so as to make them imprison true men.
- XXVIII. Prelates make men study new laws, and keep them from studying Holy Writ.
- XXIX. Prelates make lords imprison any one who has been under curse for forty days. Lords should make sure that the curse is rightful.
- XXX. Prelates' arguments for their claims to obedience and power are like the arguments of apes and gluttons.
- XXXI. Prelates despoil all classes of men in different ways.
- XXXII. Prelates think more of their parks being broken than of breaking of God's laws.
- XXXIII. Prelates take upon them the state of the apostles, and live contrary to it, so deceiving men like enemies who mount false arms.
- XXXIV. Prelates compel priests to fight in person.
- XXXV. Evils caused by celibacy of priests.
- XXXVI. Prelates silence those who would rebuke them, lest their hypocrisy be known, and they lose their endowments.
- XXXVII. Prelates maintain vicious men in their retinue.
- XXXVIII. Prelates deceive men as to pilgrimages and pardons, and teach them to care more for vows than for God's laws.
- XXXIX. Prelates rob the lower clergy in assessment of taxes.
- XL. Prelates are dumb dogs, who do not warn the flock committed to them, but give it to Satan in exchange for wealth.
- XLI. Prelates crucify Christ and slay his apostles spiritually, and so are worse than Jews.
- XLII. Prelates blaspheme the Holy Ghost by preventing true preaching.
- XLIII. Prelates claim the power of absolution, which God has reserved to himself. They have only power to act as messengers. Yet they lay more stress on their absolution than on God's forgiveness.



Here it telleþ of prelatiſ.

*Capitulum Primum.*

\* þat prelatiſ leuen præhyng of þe goſpel & ben goſtly  
manquelleriſ of mennys ſouliſ, And ſathanas *transfigurid* \*[p. 65 MSS.]  
Prelates neglect  
preaching.  
in-to an aungel of liȝt, & ben goſtly ſodomytiſ worſe þan  
bodily ſodomytiſ of ſodom and gomor. firſt, criſt seiþ in  
þe goſpel of ſeyn ion þat he waſ boren & cam in-to þe John xviii. 37.  
world for þiſ ende, to<sup>1</sup> bere wiſneſſe to treuþe; alſo criſt Chriſt came to  
bear wiſneſſe to  
the truth.  
cam in-to þiſ world to ſeke and to ſaue mankynde, þe  
whiche waſ *perſchið*. & *certiſ* criſt ſauyd mannuſ ſoule Lake xix. 10.  
bi trewe lyuynge in hiſ owen perſone, & trewe & opyn &  
fre præhyng of þe goſpel, & wilful paſſion & deþ for  
præhyng & meynſtenynge of þe goſpel; & to þiſ ſame ende He preached and  
ſuffered death  
for preaching,  
& werk criſt ordeyned alle hiſ apoſtliſ & diſcipliſ, boþe and ordered hiſ  
apoſtles to  
preach.  
bi-forſ hiſ deþ & after hiſ reſurreccion, to præche þuſ þe  
goſpel to alle men. þanne, seiþ prelatiſ & preſtiſ ordeyned Prelates come in  
the place of  
apoſtles,  
of good comen in þe ſtede of poſtliſ & diſcipliſ, þei ben  
alle bounden bi ihū criſt god & man to præche þuſ þe goſpel. and are bound  
to preach.  
¶ Alſo criſt biddiþ þriſ to petir þat iif peter loue criſt þat [John xxi. 15.]  
he fede hiſ ſcheep; þat ben criſten ſouliſ; & firſt fede bi  
enſauple of good liȝt, þe ſecunde tyme bi trewe techynge  
of þe goſpel, and þe þridde tyme bi wilful ſuffrynge of  
deiþ, to make men ſtable in þe goſpel & in hope of bliſſe:  
& here-to criſt comaunded hiſ diſcipliſ to præche opynly þe [Matt. x. 27, 28.]  
treuþe þat þei herden priuely, & drede not men þat turmenten  
& alen þe bodi, but drede hym þat may putte body & ſoule  
in-to helle wiþ-uten ende. ¶ Of þeſ two goſpelliſ it  
iſ cleer þat prelatiſ þat præchen not þuſ þe goſpel louen  
not criſt, but don fully aȝenſt hiſ heſte, whanne þei leuen  
for drede of men to teche þe goſpel; & þuſ þe heȝe preſtiſ Warning from  
Eli.  
ely waſ dede for he tauȝte not hiſ children goddiſ lawe  
and reproved not at þe fulle here ſynneſ, & þe arke<sup>2</sup> or  
couere of god waſ conquerid in-to enemyeſ hondis, & goddiſ

<sup>1</sup> betere inserted X.

<sup>2</sup> "whiche" both MSS.

- [1 Sam. iv.] peple ouercomen, and many þousandis slayn in bataile as þe first bok of kyngis telliþ. ¶ And herefore þe holy prophete ysaie crieth þat woo is to hym, for þat he was stille and dwelte among synful peple, & telle hem not here synnes, siþ þis is offis of a prophete. also god seiþ to prelatis bi
- [Isaiah vi. 5.] ezechiel, þat iif a synful man die in his synne & þe prelate telle him not his peyne for synne, god schal seke þe synful mannes bloode, þat is his synne, of þe<sup>1</sup> prelatis hondis. ¶ And here-for seiþ þat woo is to hym, þat is euerlastyng
- [1 Cor. ix. 16.] dampnacion, but iif he præche þe gospel; & siþ cristen men may not lyue gostly but bi goddis word, \*prelatis þat wiþdrawen þus goddis word fro here sugetis ben cause of deþ
- [p. 66 MS.] of here soulis, þat is a þousand folde worse þan is deþ of body, & so þei be worse man-sleeris þan þei þat only sleen
- Prelates that withdraw it are murderers. [Matt. xvi. 23.] þe body. ¶ And siþ petir was sathanas for he wolde haue
- They are Satans lettid cristis deþ & saluacion of mannes soule, him wnwyttyngge; moche more þes prelatis ben sathanas, þat þus myche contrarien cristis wille & sauynge of mennus soulis þoru; præchyng of þe gospel, & þei ben turned in-to an
- transformed into an angel of light. aungel of liȝt, for þei feynen hem in þe stede of apostlis & worche wiþ þe fend to suffre mennus soulis go to helle; & siþ goddis word, bi whiche men schulden gostly be gendrid goddis sones, is betere þan bodely seed of man bi whiche þe body of man schulde be gendred, & þes prelatis mysusen þis betere seed, þanne þei don more synne þan diden þe
- They are spiritual Sodomytes. sodomytis þat wasted mannes seed; for euer þe betre þat a þing is þe worse & þe more abhominable is þe mysusyng
- [Grossetête.] þer-of. & þe grete doctour lyncolne robert grosted groundiþ þis pleynly þat siche prelatis þat leuen to præche þus cristis gospel ben more abhominable and enemys of god & his peple þan weren þe cursed men of sodom & gomor. & siþ god seiþ bi þe prophete þat euyl præstis ben cause of fallynge of þe peple, alle manere men ben bounde to amende þis defaute; for ellis þei stonden not in goddis hestis ne charite. & here-for gregory seiþ þat no man harmeþ more cristis
- [Gregory.]

<sup>1</sup> þere X.

chirche þan he þat haþ þe name of ordre & holynesse and þer-wiþ lyueth suele, for comunly no man reproueth hym, & men taken gretly ensaumple of his synne; & þerfore crist purgid þe temple with his owen hondis, as þe gospel telliþ, in<sup>1</sup> tokene þat ȝif prestis weren good þe peple schulde sone be amendid. & for þis skille trewe men seyn þat prelatis ben more bounden to preche trewely þe gospel þan þes sugetis ben holden to paie here dymes, for god chargiþ þat more, and þat is more profitable to boþe parties & more esy. And þerfore prelatis ben more cursed to cesse of þis prechynges þanne þe sugetis ȝif þei cessen to paye tipes; ȝe, whanne here prelatis don wel here offis. ¶ Also prelatis ben more bounden to þis prechynges, for þat is comaundement of crist bifore his deþ & eke aftir, þan to seie matynes, masse, euen song, or placebo, for þat is mannes ordynaunce; þanne siþ prelatis ben not worþi to haue dymes & offrynges ȝif þei don not matynes, masse & oþer mannes ordeynyngis, moche more ȝif þei don not þis heȝe ordynaunce of god; & here-fore seiþ crist, ȝif þe salt be sonnyd it is not worthi ouer þis, but ȝif it be to be cast out & be defoulid of men; þat is ȝif prelatis failen of good lif & techynges, þei moten be þus seruyd of men, for ȝif men vnder hem knowe þis defaute & may amenden it & don not, þei consenten & meynutenen hem in þis grete synne.

Prelates are more bound to preach than their people to pay tithes.

Prelates more bound to preach than to say matins, etc.

Men who can amend prelates' faults and do not, are guilty of abetting them.

### Capitulum 2<sup>m</sup>.

\* Also prelatis letten men to do goddis wille & comaundement, & so þei neden hem to be dampnyd, & letten many to here goddis lawe; for prelatis letten & forbeden prestis to preche þe gospel in here iurdiccion or bischope-riche, but ȝif þei han leue & letteris of hem; & ȝit god comaundeþ & chargiþ alle his<sup>2</sup> prestis to preche freely the gospel. for alle cristis apostlis & disciplis weren chargid to preche þe gospel, & alle prestis ordeyned of god comen oþer in staat of apostlis or disciplis of crist, as bede & þe popis lawe seiþ; þanne

[p. 67 MS.] Prelates forbid priests to preach without their leave.

All priests are charged by God to preach,

<sup>1</sup> & X.      <sup>2</sup> þes X.

- alle *prestis* ben chargid to *preche* þe gospel. Also god seiþ  
 [Malachi ii. 7.] be þe *prophete*, þat lippis of a *prest* kepen *kunnyng*e of  
 goddis lawe, & men seken the lawe of his mouþ, for he is  
 an *aungel* of þe lord of compaynes. an *aungel* is a messenger,  
 þanne siþ þe *prest* *generaly* is a messenger of god he mot  
 schewe his message, þat is þe gospel, in whiche is *perfitly*  
 teld goddis wille; and gregory vpon þe gospel *proueþ* wel  
 [Gregory.] whether they  
 have little know-  
 ledge or much. þat eche *prest* mot *preche*, haue he litel *kunnyng*e or moche.  
 ¶ Also gregory seiþ in þe popis lawe, þat who *euere* comeþ  
 to *prested* takiþ þe office of a bedele or criere to goo bi-fore  
 þe dredful doom<sup>1</sup> of god; and<sup>2</sup> as in þe olde lawe þo *prest*  
 schulde die *þif* he ne entrid in-to a sanctuarie wiþ-outen  
 noyse, so in þe lawe of grace *þif* a *prest* be doub of þe  
*prechyng*e he stereþ goddis wratþe vpon hym. & siþ men  
 ben gretly cursid þat don *aenst* þe popis lawe, as men seyn,  
 & þis is a grete popis lawe, groundid on goddis lawe & reson  
 & charite, moche more ben þei cursed þat don *aenst* þis lawe.  
 [Jerome.] ¶ Also ierom seiþ þat *prestis* owen to *preche* bifore bischopis,  
 & þei owen to be glad þerof for þat is here worschipe. ¶ Also  
 [Austin.] austyn in a sermon seiþ þat eche man is holden to teche þe  
 good þat he can; *þe*, þou; he kunne litel. ¶ Also it is a gret  
 werk of *mercy* to teche men þe riȝtte weie to heuene, &  
 eche man is holden bi comaundement of god to do werkis  
 of *mercy*; þan is eche *prest* holden to teche þe gospel, þat  
 is þe riȝt weie to heuene. ¶ Also in þe holde lawe a man is  
 To teach the  
 gospel, that is,  
 the right way to  
 heaven, is a work  
 of mercy.  
 [Exodus xxxiii. 4.] holde to brynge þe beste of his enemye in-to þe riȝtte weie;  
 moche more is a man holden to brynge his broþeres soulis  
 out of synne in-to good weie to heuene ward. And bi þis  
 [Mark iii. 4.] reson alle cristis enemyes weren stoppid to speke *aenst* him  
 whanne he helid a sik man vpon þe sabaat day, as þe gospel  
 telliþ. ¶ Also þat riche man is out of charite þat helpiþ not  
 [1 John iii. 17.] his broþer in bodely nede, *þif* he may wel, as ioon þe  
*euangelist* seiþ; myche more is a man nedid bi charite to  
 releue his broþeres soule out of myschif of synne, *þif* he  
 haue *kunnyng*e of goddis lawe. ¶ Also men demen \* it a grete  
 \* [p. 68 MS.]

<sup>1</sup> omitted X.<sup>2</sup> omitted X.

charite to saue a mannes bodi fro deþ or dryncehyng; it is moche more charite to saue mennus soulis fro deþ of synne & of helle bi trewe præchyng of goddis lawe. ¶ A lord, what deuellis blyndnesse and cursednesse is þis, whanne þe prelat or curat is chargid of god, vp peyne of his owen dampnacion, to teche þe gospel & comaundementis of god to alle his sugetis, & here-wiþ can not teche þus, or may not for worldly bisynesse, or wole not for idelnesse or negligence, þan to lette opere to præche frely þe gospel of crist & saue mennus soulis; but þanne þei senden opere, þat tellen lesyngis, fablis, & cronyalis, & robben þe peple bi fals beggyngis, & dore not telle hem here grete synnes & auourtrie <sup>Madness of those who do not teach the gospel and who stop others that would,</sup> <sup>while they send about men who tell fables and lies.</sup> lest þei<sup>1</sup> lesen wynnynge or frendischipe. ¶ Certis he were a cruel fadir þat myȝtte not ȝeue his owene childre bred þou; þei perisheden for hunger, & ȝit wolde not suffre anoþer man to helpe þes children bi weie of mercy; but moche more cruel ben þes prelatiſ & curatiſ, þat kunnen not or may not or wolen not ȝeue here gostly children gostly bred of þe gospel, þou; here soulis ben in neuere so gret myschef, & ȝit forbeden & cursen opere men ȝif þei wolen for mercy ȝeue here breþer techyng of goddis lawe, boþe treuly & frely, with-outen beggyng as crist biddiþ. ¶ It semeþ þat syche prelatiſ & newe religious ben a-ferd of cristis gospel, for it approueþ not but distroieþ worldly lordschipe of prelatiſ & feyned holynesse of newe religious; siþ cristis religion þat he made for preſtiſ is þe beste, most perfyte, most esy, & most siker. And oure ihū wolde haue no worse religion in preſtiſ þan þat þat he made himself. ¶ Also it semeþ þat sich iurisdiction of prelatiſ, þat þus letten cristis gospel, dryuen away god fro mannes soule, & vertuous lif & charite, & bryngeþ þe fend in, and cherischiþ hym & synnes & debatiſ & werris. neþales men supposen þat newe religious han leue of worldly prelatiſ to præche here fablis and lesyngis & to robbe þe pore peple bi beggyng, vpon this condiccion, þat þei præche not spedily aȝenst symonye, extorsions & opere orible synnes of false <sup>He is a cruel father that will not feed his hungry children nor let others do so.</sup> <sup>Prelates and the new religious fear Christ's gospel.</sup> <sup>These new religious are allowed to deceive and spoil the people, so long as they do not preach against simony,</sup>

<sup>1-1</sup> omitted X.

and give prelates much gold. prelatiſ, & þat þei ȝeue þeſ worldly prelatiſ gold in gret quantite, þat þei robben of pore men. ¶ And þuſ þeſ worldly prelatiſ dampnen hem ſelf þeſ newe religious, hem ſelf, & alſo oþere preſtiſ þat wolden præche þe goſpel trewely & frely aſ moche aſ in hem iſ, and þe peple alſo; ſiþ þei ſuffren not þe peple to here goddiſ word frely, but leſyngiſ, fabliſ, and þerto to<sup>1</sup> be robbid, & þuſ þeſ prelatiſ ben procuratours of þe fend, enemyeſ of criſt, & traitours to<sup>2</sup> hiſ peple.

These prelates  
are proctors of  
the fiend.

### Capitulum 3<sup>m</sup>

Prelates teach  
against Christ  
and his apostles,  
\*[p. 69 MS.] Also comunly prelatiſ ben false prophetiſ & heretikis, for þei indede \*ſeyn heresiſ & techen aȝenſt ihū criſt & hiſ apoſtliſ; for aȝenſt criſtiſ wilful pouert þei techen in dede worldly coueitise & moche waſt in worldly goodiſ, & aȝenſt criſtiſ mekenesse þei techen in-dede pompe & pride of þe world & of here ſtatiſ, and aȝen criſtiſ byſyneſſe in præchyng & præieyng & traueile bi contrees þei techen in-dede vanyte & idelneſſe, & ben ȝeuen to glotonye & worldly biſyneſſe, & haunten courtiſ of lordiſ & worldly pleeſ, & ben dounb fro þe goſpel & tellen here owen lawiſ to magnyfie here power & pride & coueitise, & couchen in caſteliſ aſ lordiſ; & wiþ all þiſ þei ſeyn þat criſtiſ & hiſ apoſtliſ liſ & here proude liſ acorden, & ſeyn þat þei lyuen aſ criſt & hiſ apoſtliſ diden.

both in word and  
example.

Luxury and  
pomp of their  
life,

their fat horses,  
their plate,

their crowds of  
attendants,

¶ A lord! ſiþ prelatiſ comen in ſtede of apoſtliſ, hou may þei for ſchame lyue ſo contrariouſly aȝenſt here pore liſ, in waſt ſeruauantiſ, in grete fatte horſ & nedleſ, in ſhynyng veſſel, in gret aray of cloþiſ; ȝe, more þan many grete lordiſ. certis in enſaunple of here liſ þei techen errour aȝenſt criſt & hiſ apoſtliſ, ſiþ þei ſeyn þat þei ſuen criſt and apoſtliſ in manere of lyuynge. O lord! what tokene of mekenesse & forſakyng of worldly richeſſeſ iſ þiſ; a prelat aſ an abott or a priour, þat iſ ded to þe world & pride & vanyte þer-of, to ride wiþ foure ſcore horſ, wiþ harneis of ſiluer & gold, & many raggid & fittrid ſquyeriſ & oþere men ſwerynge herte & bonys & nailiſ & oþere membris of criſt, & to ſpende

<sup>1</sup> omitted X.

<sup>2</sup> of X.

wiþ erlis & barons & here pore tenauntis boþe þousand markis their lawsuits.  
 & poundes to meyntene a false plee of þe world, & forbarre  
 men of here riȝt. & ȝit þes ypocritis seyn þat þis is worschipe  
 of holy chirche, but certis þei lien, but ȝif þei clepen be  
 contrarie name þe deuelis chirche to be holy chirche, as þei  
 clepen hem self men of religion & þat þei forsaken þe world; They say that  
this is worship  
of holy church,  
but they must  
mean the devil's  
church.  
 but certis þei distroien holy religion & magnyfien veyn  
 religion, of whiche seynt Iames spekiþ, & forsaken traueile They say they  
are religious  
and forsake the  
world;  
 & peyne & dissesse of þe world, & han lordschipis, rentis,  
 gaie houses & costy, & welfare of mete & drynk, þere þei  
 myȝtten vnneþe before haue bene-bred & watir or feble ale. but they have all  
sorts of good  
things, who  
before profession  
could hardly get  
bean bread;  
 ȝe, wiþ moche care & traueile now vnneþe ony mete<sup>1</sup> or wyn  
 may serue & plese hem, but likerousnesse & lustis of here now they are  
hard to please.  
 bely han now alle þe bisnessis, and deuocion & holynesse &  
 penaunce litel or riȝt nouȝt. Of þis veyn pride of religious  
 it semeþ wel þei ben not bok of cristis pouert & holynesse,  
 as þei seye is here wordis, but bok of pride, coueitise, vanyte  
 & oþere synnes, to disceit<sup>2</sup> of goddis peple & distroiȝnge of  
 his lawe. ¶ harde criēþ seynt bernard aȝenst pompous prelatis  
 & axeþ hem þus: ȝee<sup>3</sup> prelatis, what doþ gold in ȝoure bridelis  
 & oþere araies, where it kepe hem fro cold; we perischen  
 for hunger \* and cold, seyn pore men, oure goodis þei ben þat Bernard's rebuke  
to proud prelates.  
 ȝe wasten from vs, þei ben drawen cruelly aȝenst mercy, &  
 þus ȝee<sup>4</sup> don tweie euele þingis, on for ȝoure pride & wast  
 of pore mennus goodis ȝe gon to helle, And we pore men  
 perischen in þis world for ȝoure vanyte & pride. & siþ þe lif  
 of prelatis is bok & ensauple of suȝetis, as grosted seiþ  
 wiþ many moo, & þei lyuen so opynly in pride, coueitise &  
 idelnesse, passyȝe alle oþere, þei ben open heretikis & They are open  
heretics.  
 stronge, þat han no schame of here heresie, for heresie in  
 fals lif meyntened is werse þan heresie only in herte or  
 wordis, and for sclaunderere þat þei ȝeuen to oþere men bi  
 here cursed lif god him self curseþ hem in þe gospel & seiþ  
 þus: who to þat man bi whom comeþ a sclaunder, þat is  
 ensauple to do synne, it spedij to him þat a mylneston of A cause of  
scandal.

<sup>1</sup> nite X.<sup>2</sup> dissect X.<sup>3</sup> þe X.<sup>4</sup> þei X.

[Matt. xviii. 6.] assis be hangid in his necke, & þat he be dreynt in-to Gregory. depnesse of þe see. þat is, seiþ gregory, it spedih to euyl

It were good for evil prelates that they had lived in a lower state; they should be damned to less pain.

Covetousness of prelates.

All their offices are done for money or pomp.

They pray only for show.

prelatis þat ȝeuen ensaumpele of synne to here sugetis þat þei weren in lowere staat of worldly labour & þer-wiþ wer dampnyd to depe helle; for þan þei schulden have lesse payne þan to lyue<sup>1</sup> euele in þe heȝe staat & teche oþere men do synne, for þei ben worþi as many deþes as þei ȝeuen euyle ensaumples of synne to here sugetis. But lord, who is nowe so coueitous abouten worldly lordschipis & temporal goodis as oure prelatis, for comunly alle here visitacion, alle here sacramentis and ordris ȝeuyng & halwyng of placis & vestymentis & blissyng is don<sup>2</sup> for coueitise & worldly pride & dignyte; alle here preue spekyng & pꝛeþyng & techyng in scolis is for coueitise & magnyfyyng of here worldly staat: who is more idel in goddis seruyce, more in glotonye & wastyng of pore mennus goodis in schynynge vesselis & oþere costis? & ȝif þei preien, þat is wiþ-uten deuocion to please þe peple, & comunly for offryng, & cotidian distribution, & styngkyng lif of lecherie, robberie, pride, coueitise, glotonye; þat þei rapere stiren god to wraþe & vengauce þan to mercy & pite, as goddis lawe, austyn & gregory & oþere seyntis witnessen. but, lord, siþ heresie stondiþ most in cursed lif, were ben more heretikes, siþ þei ben most synful in opyn & preuy cursed lyuyng; but where schal ony be deppere dampnyd in helle?

### Capitulum 4<sup>m</sup>.

Prelates allow men to live in sin, if they will pay for leave.

\*[p. 71 MS.]

Some bishops are said to get 2000

Prelatis also robben þe pore lige men of þe king bi fals extorisions taken bi colour of holy correccion, & ȝeuen men leue to dwellen in synne fro ȝer to ȝer, fro seuene ȝer to seuene ȝer, & comunly al here lif, ȝif þei paien bi ȝere twenti shillingis or more or lesse, and þus bi sutilte of sathanas þei han \*founde newe peynes orible & schameful to make men paye a gret raunson, to ȝene gold & baþe hem in lustis of synne as swyn in feen. And men seyn þat summe bischopis

<sup>1</sup> leue X.

<sup>2</sup> ben X.



getij in o yer two þousand mark or poundis; & ȝif he laste  
 twenty ȝeer bischop wiþ þis robberie, It wole come to sixti  
 þousand mark þat he robbij of þe kingis lige men. ¶ And þus  
 þes wickede prelatis sillen cristene mennus soulis to sathanas  
 for money, for whiche soulis crist schedde his precious herte  
 blod vpon þe cros. And here-fore þei ben worse þan iudas  
 for many skillis, for þei sillen crist in a manere as iudas dide  
 wiþ more dispit & more stynkyng coueitise, & ȝit þei hiren  
 lordis to meyntene hem in þis cursednesse, & ȝeue pore  
 mennus goodis to hem for þis ende, & hiren also iurouris &  
 oþere gentil men of contre to forswere hem wyttyngly on  
 þe bok & not to putten hem vp for extorsioneris & þeues;  
 & whanne þei schulden be principal dukis in crist oost to  
 fytte & techen oþere men bi here ensauple to fyȝte aȝenst  
 synnes, as false traitouris þei turnen þe bak & techene  
 cristene men to offere hem redy to þe deuelys sacrifice. a  
 pore man þei constreynem to synne bi manas, chydyng &  
 losse of catel & sclaudrynge, but ȝif he wolen consente to  
 hem & fauoure hem in here wrong lif; & ȝif he wol do so,  
 þanne he is an holy sone, & haþ ȝiftis & worldly frendschipe  
 & fauour & anticristis false blissyng & goddis trewe curs.  
 And þei flatren lordis whanne þei meyntenen þes anticristis  
 prelatis to robbe here tenauntis, & seyn þei worschipe þanne  
 god & holy chirche, & ȝeuen lordis grete ȝiftis of gold &  
 iuelis & pardons, & licence to syng in oratories & oþere  
 veyn þingis, and ȝif lordis wolen distroie þes synnes of  
 robberie & sathanas marchaundise, þanne anticristis prelatis  
 wolen sclaudren hem, curse hem, & entirdite hem & here  
 londis.<sup>1</sup> And þus alle men ben conquerid to þe fend almost,  
 & þus þes cursed pilatis not prelatis ben verray anticristis,  
 procuratours of sathanas, & traitours of ihū crist & his  
 peple.

or 3000 marks a  
 year by these sin-  
 rents.

Thus they sell  
 souls to Satan,

and are worse  
 than Judas.

They bribe lords

and jurors.

They make poor  
 men sin.

They flatter lords  
 who support  
 them,

and give them  
 rich gifts with  
 pardons and  
 privileges;  
 but they resist  
 any attempt of  
 lords to correct  
 them.

Pilates not  
 prelates.

<sup>1</sup> here lordis X.

Capitulum 5<sup>m</sup>.

Prelates usually enter upon their benefices by simony.

Gregory.

Simony is of three kinds: coming to a benefice (a) by gift of money,

(b) by favour of others rather than by merit, \* [p. 72 MS.]  
(c) by worldly service done to others.

They do their office neither in good life nor preaching;

they do not even comply with the pope's law.

Title of grace needful to them.

At their death they are not fully contrite,

or they would make restitution;

but this happens seldom or never.

Also *prelatis comunly ben symonyentis in here entre, in processe of here benefis, & in þe ende of here lif, & þanne in alle þes tymes þei ben heretikis, so þat alle oþere synnes ben holden for nouȝt in comparison of þis symonye, as þe beste part of þe popis lawe seiþ. for, as gregory & þe popis lawe seiþ, in þre maneres is symonye don. First whanne a man cometh to a benefis of þe chirche bi gifte of money or worldly goodis bi hym self or bi oþere menes.*

¶ *þe secunde tyme whanne a man cometh þer-to bi preiere of lordis or ladies or oþere men more than for kunnynges of goddis lawe & holy lif. ¶ þe þride tyme whanne a man cometh þer-to bi worldly seruyce of lordis & ladies, of prelatis, or oþere myȝtty men more þanne for good lif and kunnynges; but who cometh hellis to prelacie? & in processe þei mys-penden pore mennus goodis, in wast metis & festis of ryche men & pride of þis world, & don not here office comunly neþere in good lif ne trewe præchynges, & resignen not here benefis. gotten þus by symonye; & þat þei moten algatis do ȝif þei schullen be saaf vp þe popis lawe, & neuere in wille to haue it aȝen but ȝif it be bi riȝt title, & algatis confirmation of god bi titel of grace is nedeful to hem. And þat cometh not but bi verray repentaunce of synne don bi-fore, & bi trewe lif & techynges & meynatenynges of goddis lawe vpon here kunnynges & myȝt. & in here endynges þei han not comunly ful contricion for here synnes, as for mys-pendynges of pore mennus goodis, for false extorsions, for sillyng of sacramentis, for norischynges & meynatenynges of oþere men in synne, as pride, coueitise, & glotonye & alle oþere: for ȝif þei hadden þanne contricion þei schulden restore þes wickid extorsions vp here myȝt, & warne oþere men of þe synnes in whiche þei hadden norischeden hem; but þis cometh seldom or neuere, & þerfore it semeth þat þei dien heretikis but ȝif god helpe more in the laste poynt of partynges of þe soule & body, & ellis þei dien dampnyd*

fendis of helle. ¶ But lordis & ladies here mosten ben wel war, for þif þei ȝeuen benefis to clerkis fore here worldly seruyces, princypali as for kechene clerkis & countynge or daunsynge, for palfreis or keuercheris, gold or oþer worldly seruyce, it is foul symonye & cursed on boþe parties, as goddis lawe and þe chirche & holy seyntis techen. ¶ And also þif þei ȝeuen a benefis for men ben of here kyn, or for fleschly loue, or worldly frendischipe, or ellis for þe clerk<sup>1</sup> is manly to þe lord in gay clopinge, in grete festis, gret archerie, or ony oþere veyn iapis more þan for þe worschipe of god & profit of mannes soule, it is stynkyng symonye bi-fore god, as lawes and seyntis techen. ¶ And here ben þre poyntis of treson to god & his peple; þe first is þat lordes & ladies ben tratours þat holden curatis in worldly offices fro þe soulis þat þei han cure of; for god ȝeueþ hym lordischipis & presentynge of chirchis to meyntene goddis lawe & help trewe prestis to teche his peple þe gospel & maundementis of god, & þif þei holden wiþ goddis tresour curatis in here worldly seruyce or chapellis, & letten hem to kepe cristene soulis, þe whiche crist bouȝt wiþ his precious blod, þei ben foul traitours to \*ihū crist & to þe peple þat þei disceyuen þus; but ȝit more treson is in clerkis þat coueiten & taken þis worldli office wiþ<sup>2</sup> cure of cristene soulis and may not do hem to-gedre, for þei schulden teche þe lordis þe treuþe of goddis lawe & also þe peril in þis poynt, & don nouȝt, for ope of grettere benefices or for flaterynge of here lordschipe; but the moost tratourie of alle stondiþ in fals confessouris, þat schulden telle þe treuþe of goddis lawe & don not for lesynge of worldly lordschipe, frendeschipe, fauour or worldly wyunnyng, boþe of þe lord & his meyne & of þe false curat þer-to; & þus þe lord or the lady hireþ costly a fals iudas to his confessour, þat suffriþ him & lediþ him þe heiȝe weie to helle. ¶ Also prelatis ben ful of symonye whanne þei mynystren here sacramentis or ony gostly office for money or þank or preiynge of men of þe world or for

Lords and ladies should know that it is simony to give benefices for worldly service,

or personal favour.

Three points of treason to God and his people.

1st. When lords and ladies keep curates from their cure to employ them in worldly office.

2nd. Worse treason is in the clergy who take these offices.

3rd. The worst treachery is in false confessors.

Prelates are full of simony when they administer sacraments, etc., for worldly reasons.

<sup>1</sup> celrk X.

<sup>2</sup> omitted X.

ony worldly *seruyce*. For crist biddeþ hem þeue al þis frely  
 as þei taken it freely of god, & þe prophete seiþ he is blissed  
 þat kepip his hondis clene fro alle manere gifte, & he is cursed  
 þat doþ þe werk of god wiþ neegligence or fraude. ¶ And it  
 is a foul fraude to [do] þis gostly office for worldly reward  
 or for þanke or *preisynge* of synful men, whanne þei schulden  
 do it for goddis worschipe frely & helpe of mannus soule.

¶ But þit symonye of þe court of rome doþ most harm, for  
 it is most comune & vnder most colour of holynesse, & robbip  
 most oure lond of men & tresour; for alle nacions of this  
 cristendom rennen þider as to welle of trowþe and gostly  
 helpe, & þei ben most disceyued, for þei wenen þat þere is  
 no symonye for holynesse of þe court of rome. & many  
 kunnyng men & able ben dede bi þe weie, what wiþ *traueile*  
 & cold & *opere* myscheffis & enemyes, & ofte *raunsonyd*, &  
 beren out of þe lond moche gold to *raunson*, to spende bi þe  
 weieþe; þe to spende at rome many þeris & daies, to paie  
 for selis or bullis, to plede for benefices, offryngys, dymes,  
 & many mo causes, to paie þe pope þe first froytys, & cardy-  
 nals & bribouris to spede here nedis, & for pardons, quyenals,  
 priuylegies, for assoilyngis of wowes, & many feyned iapis,  
 þat men supposen alle þes passen þre fiftenþes; & alle goþ  
 out of owre lond comunly in-to enemys hondis, & for al þis  
 comeþ a lital ded lede, & mayntenynge of false plee, & strif,  
 & goddis cura, & symonye, & heresie. for þif it be symonye a  
 clerk to *serue* a lord for a benefice & þe lord to resceyue þe-  
 fore gold or gold worþ, bi þe same skil it is symonye to *serue*  
 þe pope in sich a straunge *traueile* and contre, & þeue hym  
 gold for his lede, & þe fryste fruytes for gifte of a chirche;  
 & þit whanne a lord haþ þe gold for his *presentynge* þe gold  
 dwellip stille in oure lond, but whanne þe pope haþ þe furste  
 fruytes þe gold goþ out & comeþ neuere aȝen. And so for  
 pardons, þif þei ben ouȝt worþi þei mosten be free, & to take  
 money for hem is to selle goddis *grace* and so symonye, &  
 þan boþe parties ben cursed of god & man; & so *antycrist*  
 haþ forbarrid þe fredom of goddis lawe in schriftis, masse,

They are bound  
to give freely  
as they have  
received.

Simony of the  
court of Rome is  
most harmful.

All people run  
thither.

Some die by the  
way.

They take much  
treasure out of  
the land

to pay for bulls.

The money paid  
to Rome is sup-  
posed to be more  
than three-  
fifteenths,  
in return for  
which we get a  
little lead and  
much mischief.

It is simony to  
pay firstfruits for  
the gift of a  
church,  
\* [p. 74 MS.]

and the coin is  
lost to the realm.

To take money  
for pardons is  
simony.

syngynge, & opere deuociouns & takiþ gold of men to brynge  
 hom sum del to þis fredom, & so robben hem bi ypocrisyse  
 as ȝif it were not leful to do profit to<sup>1</sup> mennus soulis wiþ-out  
 dispensynge of anticrist. But now to schewe þe malice &  
 cursednesse of symonye; first, almyȝtti god dampneþ it in  
 þe olde lawe, crist in þe gospel, & is apostlis after þe sendynge  
 of þe<sup>2</sup> holy gost; first, whanne þe wickid kyng ieroboam  
 made false maunmetis & stockis and worschipe hem for  
 almyȝtty god, bi-cause þat he selde þe prest-hode of þes  
 false goddis for worldly ȝiftis god almyȝtty distroied hym  
 & alle his seed. also, for giesy toke money & cloþis of  
 naaman whanne helise þe prophete his maistir hadde helid  
 hym, þe leper of naaman cleuyd to hym & his generacion  
 euere aftir, in tokene þat gostly lepre, þat is heresie,<sup>3</sup> schulde  
 dwelle wiþ alle syche as taken 'money or' money worþ for  
 gostly offices; ȝe, wiþ-outen couenant makynge. also god  
 seiþ bi þe prophete malachie to þe iewis þat his wille is not  
 to hem: "For þer nys noon þat shittip frely þe doris of þe  
 temple." þanne god chargip more þe betre offis as makynge  
 of sacramentis & ȝeeunye of ordris, þat men plese hym  
 not but ȝif þei don hem frely. ¶ Also crist in þe gospel drof  
 out of þe temple hem þat selden & bouȝten þer-inne, ȝee,  
 wiþ his owen hondis, þat we reden not of many opere synful  
 men þat he tok so moche vengauce in his firste comynge,  
 in tokene þat he scharpliēst schal ponysche hem þat don  
 symonye. Also petir seyde to symon magus; þi money be  
 wiþ þe in-to loos of dampnacion, for þou gessedest to haue  
 goddis ȝiftee þorou; money. ¶ Also symonye is contrarie to al  
 þe hole trinitye & to eche persone þer-of; first to þe fadir,  
 for whanne god wole not and may not brynge vnable men  
 in-to benefices of þe chirche for his riȝtwysnesse & vnablete  
 of hem self, þei præsumen to comen in bi symonye; as ȝif  
 þe peny & falsnesse of þe fend were more þan þe myȝt of  
 þe fadir of heuene. also ihū crist is dore bi whiche men  
 schulde entre in-to offices & benefices of þe chirche, &

Antichrist sells  
a little of the  
freedom which  
he has taken  
away.

Condemnations  
of simony in  
scripture.

Jeroboam pun-  
ished for selling  
the priesthood,

Gehazi for taking  
gifts of Naaman.

Malaachi i. 10.

Christ purged  
the temple.

[Acts viii. 30.]  
Simon Magus.

Simony is con-  
trary to all the  
persons of the  
trinity.

The devil's  
money and deceit  
are put above the  
Father's will.

Christ is the door,

<sup>1</sup> of X.

<sup>2</sup> omitted X.

<sup>3</sup> here ne, in both MSS.

<sup>4-4</sup> omitted X.

but simoniacs  
enter another  
way.

\*[p. 75 MS.]

Simoniacs sell  
the Holy Ghost.

Arius.

Pope's law  
ordains horrible  
penalties against  
simoniacs.

Prevalence of  
simony.

Friars forsake  
Christ's poverty,

and allure young  
children by  
simony.

Curates.

Simony reigns  
in all states of  
the church,

symonyentis wolen come in bi another weie of falsnesse, as þif þei wolden putte away ihū crist, & be more maistris & more witty þan he. Also symonyentis as \*myche as in hem is sellen þe holy gost, & maken him þral or bounden to synful men & fendis, whanne þei sillen & biggen þus his giftis; & þerfore þei ben worse heretikis þan þe cursed heretik arrian & his secte þat made þe holy gost lesse in myȝt þan þe fadir & þe sone, & seruant to hem boþe as þe lawe seiþ. For as þe synne of sodom was moost aȝenst kynde & so most synne in þo olde lawe, so is symonye as doctours seyn most aȝenst grace & most synne in þe lawe of grace. And þerfore in þe popis lawe decrees & decretals symony is generaly clepid heresie, & orible peynes ordeyned aȝenst men þat don symonye on ony manere bi hem self or oþere mene persones, bi here wille & consent, & in sum cas hem vnwytynge. ¶ Also generaly prelatis regnen in symonye, as bischopis, munkis, chanons, & freris, & lesse curatis; for bischopis, munkis & chanons sillen þe perfeccion of cristis pouert & his apostlis, & also trewe prechyng for a litil stynkyng muk or drit, & worldli lordschipe, & wombe ioie and idelnesse, & freris forsaken þe perfit pouert of crist and his apostlis for pride of þe worldly staatis & flatteryng þer-to and ypocrisie & beggyng to geten esely & plenteuously catel of lordis & ladies & comunes, & to geten ȝonge childre to here feyned ordre by symonye, as aplis, purses & oþere iapes & false bihestis, & bi false stelyng aȝenst here frendis wille, and aȝenst goddis comaundement. And lesse curatis forsaken holy lif & trewe prechyng of crist & his apostlis for bisynesse & worschipe of þe world & for glotonye & drunkenesse & lecherie; & ofte bi open symonye comen to here benefices, & dwellen stille in hem whanne þei ben vnable to teche goddis lawe in word & dede; & þus symonye regneþ in alle staatis of þe chirche, boþe in statis groundid of crist & in oþere groundid of foolis as þif þei weren statis of holy chirche, but þei ben statis of þe wicked chirche brouȝte in by lesyngis & ypocrisie.

And siþ þe kyng & lordis ben chargid of god to distroie and king and  
þis synne & oþere, & mowen don it & don it not, þei ben to R. lords consent  
consenteris & fautouris þer-of.

### Capitulum 6<sup>m</sup>.

Also prelatiſ halden þe halwyng of dede stonys or dede Prelates think  
erþe & oþere ornamentis of þe chirche, as vestymentis, cloþis, consecration of  
chalis, & oile, & crem, more worþi þan þe halwyng and churches, chrism,  
blissynge of þe sacramentis of þe auter, þat is verray cristis etc., of more  
flech & his blood; & so it semeþ þat þei holden dede stonys worth than con-  
& dede erþe & roten cloþis more worþi þan cristis owen secration of the  
precious body & his blood. ¶ For þei holden to hem self for they keep  
halwyng of auter stonys, chirchis & chirche ȝerdis & oþere the former to  
cloþis of þe<sup>1</sup> chirche as more worþi \* & precious, & suffren themselves, and  
pore prestis, be þei neuere so vnkunynge and vicious let any priest  
anentis god so þat þei speke not aȝenst þe synne of prelatiſ, make the sacra-  
to make þe sacrament of þe auter eche day, as ȝif þat were ment of the altar.  
lesse worþi & lesse precious. ¶ Also þei wolen suffre an auter [p. 76 MS.]  
vnhalwedid, or a chirche or a chirche ȝerde suspendid & no  
masse seyð þer-inne, ȝe fourtene nyȝt, ȝe a moneþ, ȝe longe  
ynowþ, ȝif fourty pens ben bihynden of ten mark or ten  
pound; & alle þis þei taken bi extorsions, bi þefte & symonye,  
& hauen no mercy, be þe peple neuere so poer, neuere so nedy,  
& neuere so deuout to here goddis<sup>2</sup> word or<sup>3</sup> seruyce; but  
where ben worse tirauntis & heretikis? & þus in alle here  
dedis of gostly offices þei cursen hem self & þe peple also,  
for þei don not þat þat longiþ to here office for stynkyng  
symonye, & maken þe peple to consente & meyntheyne here  
synne of symonye & heresie, for þei don many sotil menyis, as graunten pardon & here feyned blissyng to halwyng of  
chirchis, to make þe peple wilful to bere hem vp in here  
synne. ¶ And ȝif ony man for drede of god & his conscience  
aȝenstonde þis extorsion and robberie & symonye he schal  
be rebukid, dispised, sumned, cursed, lese his catel & in cas

They will leave  
these offices un-  
done if their fees  
be not fully forth-  
coming.

Simony in this  
matter.

Prelates perse-  
cute those, who  
oppose their  
simony.

<sup>1</sup> omitted X.

<sup>2,3</sup> omitted X.

his bodi to prison or to deþ, & sumtyme be in hate, in strif & enuye, & ful of his wrecchid lif. & þif he consente wilfully to þis foule symonye þanne he is dede in synne, as poul seiþ, & þif he aȝenstonde it, what bi cautelis of anticrist & malice of þe fend, he schal be *tourmentid* bi wrapþe & vnpacience & traueile & peyne of his bodi & loos of his catel, þat vnneþis schal he be sauȝd but nedid to be dampnyd; & þus it semeþ þat þei þat schulden be most principal helperis to cristene mennus soulis þei ben most principal *procuratours* of þe fend to encombre hem in synne.

God keeps these offices from poor priests to save them from hell.

and ȝit it semeþ þat oure goode god kepith þes veyn offices & feyned sacramentis fro his pore preȝtis þat þei gon not þe brode weie to helle for mysusynge of hem.

### Capitulum 7<sup>m</sup>.

Prelates care more for worldly goods than for Christ's gospel.

Prelatis also setten more pris bi a litel styngynge<sup>1</sup> drit of worldly goodis þan þei don bi þe moȝte holy gospel of ihū crist; for þe grete bysynesse þat þei han abouten worldly goodis & þe litel *traueile* & studyng abouten cristis gospel prouen wel þat þei louen more þis worldly muk þan þe gospel of ihū crist; for þe dede doyng is *proff* of loue, as gregory seiþ, & here-fore þei *preisen* & techyn mannus lawis & here owen *tradiciouns* to gete þe peny by, but þei leuen & dispisen þe gospel & letten it to be *prechid*, for þe gospel techiþ þe holy lif of crist & his apostlis & dampneþ þe cursed lif of þes worldly prelatiȝ, & þei commaunden þat no man schal *\*preche* þe gospel but at here wille & lymytacion, & forbeden men to here þe gospel vp peyne of þe grete curs. but sathanas in his owne persone durste

\*[p. 77 MS.] They will not let the gospel be preached but at their will.

Satan quoted scripture, and so showed it more respect than they.

neuȝre do so myche dispit to crist & his gospel, for he aleid holy writt to crist & wolde haue proued his entente þer-bi. & siþ it is cristis conseil & comaundement to preȝtis generally to *preche* þe gospel, and þis þei moten not do wiþ-oute leue of þes prelatiȝ, þat in cas ben fendis of helle, þanne

<sup>1</sup> styngynge AA.



*prestis* may not do *cristis* conseilis & hestis wiþ-uten leue of fendis. A, lord ihū! for þes synful foolis, & in cas fendis of helle, ben more myȝtti & witti þan þou, þat trewe men may not do þe wille wiþ-uten auctorite of sicke fendis. ¶ A, lord god almyȝtty, al witti & alle ful of charite, hou longe wilt þou suffre þes *anticristis* to dispise þe in þyn holy gospel & lette þe helpe of cristene mennus soulis? Endeles riȝtful lord, þis þou suffredest for synne generally <sup>Appeal to God for help.</sup> regnyng among þe peple, but endeles merciful & goode lord, helpe þi pore wrecchide *prestis* & *seruauntis* to fore þi peple to haue lone, drede & reuerence to þi gospel, & lette not to do þi worschipe & wille for fals ferynge of *anticristis* & fendis of helle. ¶ Almyȝtti lord god and merciful & endeles witty, siþ þou suffredest petir & alle apostlis<sup>1</sup> to haue so grete drede & cowardise in tyme of þi passion þat þei flowen alle away for drede of deþ And for a litel pore wommanus vois, and aftirward by confort of þe holy gost madist hem so stronge þat þei weren afferd of no man, no peyne ne deþ; helpe nowe bi ȝeftis of þe same holy gost þi pore *seruauntis* þat al þer lif han ben cowardis, & make hem stronge & bolde in þe cause to meyntene þi gospel aȝenst *anticristis* & tirauntis of þis world. & graunte grace to oure lordis alle to meyntene þi gospel & þin ordynauce, & specialy to seke þi worschipe & myȝttily distroie synne; for to þis office þou hast ordeyned lordis. ¶ Almyȝtti lord, it semeþ nowe to<sup>2</sup> foolis of this world þat þi cause is ouercomen and *anticrist* haþ þe victorie, & pore men, lord, doren not abide þi *seruyce*; but now lord, for glorie of þin owe name, & for sauynge of cristene soulis whom þou bouȝttest wiþ þin precious herte blood, & for distroynge of boost & pride of *anticrist* & his þat now ben so heiȝe & myȝtty, graunte þi *seruauntis* grace to laste trewe in þe gospel & preche it trewely in word & dede; & þi lordis to meyntene it styfly aȝenst *anticristis* clerkis; & þi comunes, lorde, to kepe þin hestis & knowe *anticristis*

<sup>1</sup> omitted X.<sup>2</sup> omitted X.

disceit, & clenly take þi gospel in reuerence & lette not for false drede of anticrist & oþere fendis. so be it, lord.

### Capitulum 8<sup>m</sup>.

Prelates care more for money than for Christ's blood.  
[P. 78 MS.]

If men's souls go to hell, no matter, so they get their penny.

They are sorry when men reform and cease to pay sin-rent.

Also *prelatis* setten more pris bi þe roten peny þanne þei don bi þe precious blood of ihū crist, for þe ende of schedyng of \*cristis bloode was to saue mannis soulis & it was pris for hem; þanne as þei louen more þe roten peny þanne þe sauynge of cristene soulis, so þei louen more þe roten peny þan þe blood of ihū crist, & in tokene þer-of þei ben besy boþe nyȝt & day to gete þe peny wiȝ falsnesse, cautelis & tirauntrie, but of mennus soulis is left care; ȝif þe peny fayle þei ben woode for wrappe & sorowe, ȝif mennus soulis gon to helle bi brekyng of goddis comaundementis no warde, so þat þe peny come faste to fille here hondis & coffris. & herefore men seyn þei maken marchaundise wiȝ money & mennys soulis to sathanas, for þei ȝeuen men licence to dwelle in synne for annuel rente as longe as hem likiȝ, & þus sathanas getiȝ soulis to helle for þe roten peny; for men seyn þat cayphas bischopis ben sory whanne men forsaken here olde synnes and paien nomore here annuel rente. ¶ And seyn þat þei may not holde good hous bi siche men, as þouȝ þei wolde sende þousande soulis to satanas for to haue moche roten money & a proude name in þe world of gret housholdyng.

### Capitulum 9<sup>m</sup>.

Prelates kill men spiritually.

Loose life of prelates,

imitated by curates

Also *prelatis* killen men gostly, ȝeuyng euyll ensauple & disceyuyng pore men of here almes, & wiȝ-drawyng goddis word bi whiche þei schulden lyue gostly, for ensauple of pride, coueitise, wrappe, vnmercy, vanyte, glotonye & lecherie þei ȝeuen to alle men aboute; & manye of þes synnes ben so open þat it nedȝ no more to declare hem, but of lecherie men seyn þat many *prelatis* ben ful þer-of & of þe moste cursed spices þer-of, þat it is schame to writen it but more to done it in dede; & lowere curatis taken ensauple at hem

& seyn, whi may not we haue lemmannus siȝ þe bischop haȝ  
 so manye? & sugetis taken ensauple at here curatis, boȝe and laymen.  
 weddid men & sengle. & þus prelatiſ bi þis cursed ensauple  
 sleen in als mychel as in hem is alle manere men, for þei  
 dorn not for schame of her owen synne sadly amende oþere  
 synful, ne wiȝ-stonde wronges of souereyns þat þei don to  
 pore men. ¶ And here-wiȝ prelatiſ disceyuen<sup>1</sup> pore men of  
 here almes, for bi fals pardon þei maken men to ȝeue here  
 nedi liffode to here cathedral chirches þat han no nede, &  
 make þe pore men to hope of more þank of goddis mercy to  
 don here almes to riche houses & riche men more þan to don  
 it to here pore neiȝeboreſ þat ben bedrede, febil, & crokid  
 & blynd, & þer-wiȝ han nouȝt of here owen. And certis þis  
 is worse þeste þan to robbe hem as an owlawe doȝ. For he  
 takȝ comunly gold or siluer, but þer prelates taken \*boȝe of \*  
 pore men & disceyuen hem in feiȝ, hope & charite, & also  
 þei suffren oþere false pardoneriſ disceyuen þe peple for a  
 litel money, & lesse curatis haunten þis false craft. ¶ Also  
 þes prelates bi extorsions and maistrie taken þe litel good  
 þat þei schulden lyue bi þat þei geten bi gret swoot of here  
 body, & þus, as god seiȝ of tyrauntis, þei taken here skyn  
 fro þe bak, & eten & drynkyn mennus blood, whanne þei be  
 raueine & ypocrisiſ disceyuen hem of here goodis bi whiche  
 here bodely lif schulde be susteyned, & whiche goodis þei  
 gaten bi hard traueile & wastyng of flech & blood; & þus  
 þei ben manquelleriſ & irreguler bi-fore god & his aungeliſ.  
 ¶ Also þei prechen not cristis gospel in word & dede bi whiche  
 cristene men schuld lyue holy lif in charite, but blaberen  
 forþe anticristis bullis to maken cristene men to werre eche  
 wiȝ oþere in hope to wynne heuene bi siche werris, & ȝit  
 þei letten trewe men to teche treuli & frely cristis gospel  
 & his comaundementis, but þei senden newe ypocritis to  
 preche fablis & lesyngis & to flateren men in synne, & to  
 robbe þe pore peple bi fals beggyng dampnyd of goddis  
 lawe, & ȝit þei maken þe peple to erre in bileue & to trowe

Prelates dare not  
 for shame correct  
 men of sin,  
 nor oppose op-  
 pression.

Prelates take  
 poor men's live-  
 lihood;

Micah iii. 2.

publish bulls en-  
 couraging men to  
 fight with each  
 other.

<sup>1</sup> disceyuen X.

þat crist beggyd þus als þei don; but certis þis his an open heresie aȝenst cristis gospel & his lif, & as þe olde lawe & þe newe schewyn pleynty; & þus þes prelati killen mennus soulis bi sclauudre of here owen euyl lif, bi disceit of almes, & suffrynge of false techeris & false robberis of þe peple.

Thus they kill men's souls.

### Capitulum 10<sup>m</sup>.

Prelates lay more weight on their own curses than on God's.

Curses enforced by imprisonment.

Absolution may be bought.

True teachers of God's law put under curse.

\*[p. 80 MS.]

Unjust rules of evidence.

Ouere þis prelati chargen more here owen cursyng, þat is many tymys fals, þan þe moste riȝtful curse of god almyȝtty. And here-bi þei menen & schewen in dede but falsly þat þei ben more þan almyȝtty god in trinite. ¶ For ȝif a man be acursed of prelati, ȝe wrongly, a-noon alle men ben tauȝt bi hem to flee him as a iew or a sarsyn, & ȝif he dwelle fourty daies in here curs he schal be taken to prison. But þo þat ben cursed of god for bregynge of his hestis, as proude men, enuyous, coueitous, glotons & lecherouse, ben not ponyschid þus, but holden vertuous & worþi & manly men; & so goddis curs is seit at nouȝt but wrongful mannes curs is chargid aboue þe cloudis. And ȝit þouȝ a man be cursed of god & of a prelat also trewly, ȝif he wole ȝeue gold or money at a false mannus wille he schal be assoilid as anemti men, þouȝ he dwelle in his synne & þanne in goddis curs. ¶ But see now þe mysusyng of mannus curs; ȝif a trewe man displese a worldly prelat for techynge & meynentenynge of goddis lawe, he schal be sclaundrid for a cursed man & forboden to teche cristis gospel, & þe peple chargid vp \*peyne of þe grete curs to flee & not heren s[i]ch a man for to saue here owen soulis; & þis schal be don vnder colour of holynesse; for þei wolen seie þat siche a man techiȝ heresie & brynge many false witnesses & notaries in his absence, & in presence speke no word, & þei feynen þis false lawe, ȝif þre or four false witnesses hirid bi money seye sich a þing aȝenst a trewe man, þan he schal not be herd, þouȝ he wolde proue þe contrarie bi two hundrid or þre; & þes false men seye in here doynge þat crist was lafully don to þe deȝ, & susanne also, for bi sich witnessis

þei weren dampnyd, but cristene men bileue techiþ þe contrarie. & bi þis false lawe þei may proue heretikis whom euere þei wolen; ȝe, crist & alle his apostlis & alle his martirs & trewe men in þis world, & proue eche kyng in cristendom forsworn & no kyng; but certis god techiþ in his lawe þat o trewe man, as danyel dede, schal conuycte two false prestis; & þe prophete haly conuycte eiȝte hundrid & mo of false prestis & prophetis of baal. & þes prelatis wolen distroie al goddis lawe þat techiþ hou false witnessen schullen be ponyschid, for þei wolen not haue hem conuycted of here falsnesse bi mo trewe men; & ȝit whanne a man is falsly cursed of a prelat, ȝe þouȝ þe prelat be a deuyl of helle, he schal not be assoilid til þat he swere to stonde to here dom þou it be aȝenst goddis lawe & his conscience. & þus þei ben fully contrarie to goddis dom & ryȝtwisnesse, for ȝif a man haue terespasid neuere so aȝenst god he wole assoile him for verray contricion wiþ-uten siche sweryng or charging of vnresonable þingis, but þei falsly enhaunsen hem aboue god almytti. ¶ þus it stondiþ of mannus curs; apostlis of crist hadden power to take mennys bodyes to sathanas to traueilen hem whanne þei weren rebelle aȝenst goddis hestis til þei weren meke aȝen for peyne & for woo, & so to saue þe soule; but nowe anticristis clerkis cursen þe soule in-to helle as þei feynen, but þe body is neuere þe more traueilid. & certis þes ben cruel fadris þat þus violently cursen here children in-to helle, not for rebelte aȝenst god ne his lawe, but for cristene men wiþ-stonden þe prelatis coueitise or his pride, or for þei techen & meyn-tenen þe gospel of ihū crist. ¶ Also whanne þei cursen for here coueitise & here owen vengauce þei cursen hem self, as þe lawe seiþ, for þei bent out of charite aȝenst god & man. ¶ Also whanne þei cursen a man þat meynteneþ goddis lawe paciently & stably god blisseþ aȝenst here cursyng, but þei blynden so þe peple þat goddis blissing is sett at nouȝt, but here false curs is drede more þan god almyȝtty. Also whanne þei bliessen a man þat meynteneþ hem in here

By such rules  
any false charges  
may be proved.

1 Kings xviii.

An excommuni-  
cated man not  
absolved except  
on submission,  
although wrong-  
fully cursed.

1 Cor. v. 5.  
Christ's apostles  
gave men's  
bodies to Satan  
to save their  
soules  
Anticrist's  
clerks curse  
the soul.

They curse them-  
selves really.

\*[p. 81 MS.]

They mislead the people.

cursed \*lif god him self curseþ þat man, as god seiþ bi þe prophete, but þei blyndyn so þe peple þat here false blissyng is magnyfied & goddis riȝtful curs is not dred, & þus þei putten goddis dom & blissyng & cursyng bihynde & setten hem at nouȝt, & magnyfien here owen false dom and blissyng & cursyng aboue god almyȝty: but in oþere placis is more of þis matere.

### Capitulum 11<sup>m</sup>.

Prelates deceive men by vain prayers and new song,

do not fulfil their duties,

but live in luxury and pomp.

Prayer consists chiefly in good life, Austyn.

and in desire to do God's will,

and in word.

Prov. xxviii. 9.

Isaiah i. 15.

Mal. ii. 2.

Prov. xv. 8.

Austyn.

Also prelatiſ disceyuen lordis & alle cristene men bi veyn preieris of mouþ, & veyn knackyng of newe song & costy, for bi tittle of preire þei han many worldly lordschipis & many parische churcheis appropriid to hem, & don neiþer office of prelatiſ as cristis disciplis diden, neiþer office of lordis as þei owen to do bi goddis lawe, neiþer þe office of parsones ne vekeris to here parischenes; but lyuen<sup>1</sup> in pompe & pride, coueitise, & in wraþþe, slouþe & in ydelnesse, & stenkyng lecherie, glotonye & droukenesse, & gret ypocrisie, and so techen þe fendis armys of synne & distroien þe clenness of cristis lif as moche as þei may. preiere stondiþ principaly in good lif, & of þis preiere spekiþ crist whanne he seiþ in þe gospel þat we mosten eueſe preie; for austyn & oþere seyntis seyn as longe as a man dwelleþ in charite so longe he preieþ wel. ¶ Also preiere stondiþ in holy desir to do goddis wille, & of þis spekiþ goddis lawe & seyntis ful myche. ¶ Also preiere stondiþ in word, as comunly men speken, & þis is nouȝt worþ but ȝif it be don wiþ deuocion & clenness & holynesse of lif. ¶ For holy writt seiþ þat his prøyng is abhomynable þat turneþ away & heriþ nouȝt þe lawe; þat is to seiþ, þat fulfilliþ not goddis lawe in his lif. And of siche viked men seiþ god bi his prophete: whanne ȝe schulle multiplie ȝoure preieris y schal not here ȝou. ¶ And god seiþ bi þe prophete to suche men: y schal warrie or curse to ȝoure blissynges, & god seiþ bi salamon þat þe sacrifices of wicked men ben abhomynable, & austyn seiþ in many placis þat ȝif ȝou lyuest in glotonye & droukenesse, what eueſe ȝi tonge

<sup>1</sup> lyuem X.

sowneþ, þi lif blasphemeth god; & gregory seiþ whanne he þat displeseþ is sent for to preie, wiþ-uten doute þe herte of him þat is wroþ is stirid to werse wrappe. A lord, siþ prelatiſ ben so fer fro goddis lawe þat þei wolen not preche hem-self ne suffre oþere men to preche þe gospel trewely & frely, hou abhominable is here preire bi-fore god almyȝtȝ. lord, siþ prelatiſ witte not where here preiere be acceptable or dampnable, whi magnyfien þei it so moche & sillen it so dere? for a lewid manne preiere þat schal be sauȝd is wiþ-uten mesure betre þan þat prelat þat schal be dampnyd, & siþ no prelat whot where he schal be dampnyd, whi silliþ he his cursed preiere to þe lewid man so dere? ¶ And þer-fore god kep iþ to his owne knowynge þe worþynesse of mannes preiere, for men schulden not vse marchaundise of symonye þerby; for god techiþ vs be seynt poul iif a man resceyue vnworþily þe sacrament of þe auter þat man resceyueþ his dampnacion. And siþ prelatiſ hondis ben ful of blood, boþe of quellyng of men wiþ here owen hondis sumtyme, & bi wille & fals conseilynge to wronge werriſ, & ful of synne, as symonye, extorsions & robberie, & of meynntenynge in synne for ȝer to ȝer for money, hou schal god here hem? siþ he seiþ nay hym-self bi þe prophete: foule ben oure lordis blent to meynntenen open traitours of god, bi gret cost of rentis & lordischipis & ȝifte of grete benefices, for here stynkyng & abhomynable blastis & lowd crynge; for bi þer grete cryng of song, as deschaunt, cowntre note & orgene, þei ben lettid fro studynge & prechyng of þe gospel; & here owene fyndynge vp, þat crist & apostliſ spoken not of, as is þis newe song, þei clepen it goddis seruyce, & magnyfien it at þe fulle, but good lif & techynge of þe gospel þei setten at nouȝt. And ȝit crist comaundiþ þat most of alle þingis in þis world; & þus þei þenken it ynow; to kepe here owene fyndyngis and to traueilen aboute hem, þou þei leuen þe ordynauce of god & studynge of his lawe, & þus it is verrefyed, but on an euyll manere, þat seynt poul seiþ: whanne þe presthod is translatid, it is nede þat þe lawe be

Gregory.  
Prayer of wicked  
men abominable.

A good layman's  
prayer better  
than a bad pre-  
late's.  
\*[p. 82 MS.]

Worth of prayer  
known only to  
God.

1 Cor. xi. 29.

Fanciful music

hinders them  
from preaching  
the gospel.

Hebrews vii. 12.

Priests given to secular office, as stewards, etc.

Antichrist's clerks say that the prayer of such is heard by virtue of holy church,

but God does not hear the wicked \* [p. 83 MS.]

when they pray for themselves. Charity should begin at home.

Thus the people are deceived by vain prayers.

translatid; for whanne presthod stod in holy prestis of<sup>1</sup> lif & studiousse & kunnyng, þanne was holy writt ynow; to hem & studied & kept in dede wiþ gret reuerence; but now, whanne presthod stondeþ in peny clerkis & stewardis of lordis houses & ladies & ydiotis & symonyentis & proude wrecchis ful of all manere synne, it is nede to haue newe lawes maad of synful foolis to colouren þis synne by and to gedre gredely tiþes whanne þei don not here office; for goddis lawe helpeþ hem not her-to but dampneþ here pride, symonye, coueytise & oþere synnes. ¶ And ȝit anticristis clerkis feynen þat þou; synful prelatiſ & cursed ben not herd in here preiere for here owen holynesse, ȝit preiere of<sup>2</sup> sicke is herd in vertu of holy chirche; but þis dremyng nys not groundid in any place of holy writt, for god seiþ generally þat þis preiere is abhominable þat turneþ away & heriþ not goddis lawe; & comunly suche cursed prelatiſ ben no part of holy chirche, in cas þat þei sullen be dampnyd; also syche cursed prestis dispisen god in his face, hou schulde god here hem þanne, siþ in cas þei ben fendis \* of helle? ¶ Also god heriþ not sicke cursed men for hem self, hou schulde he þanne here hem for oþere men, whanne charite schuld bigyne at hem-self. ¶ Also in þe olde lawe god tok gret vengauce of hem þat offreden oþer fier þan god ordeyned in his sacrafice, & þis fire was token of charite, þat who euere dede ony sacrifice to god wiþ-uten charite schulde not ben acceptid, but vengauce schulde come on him oþer gostly or bodily; but þe fend blyndiþ men bi syche false colour to tristen in ypocritis preieris, & sumtyme in preieris of fendis, & not to amende hem of here synne but rapere to meyntene hem þerinne; & þus is oure peple disceyued bi veyn preieris of synful ypocritis, & holy writt not knowen ne kept, but vanyte, pride & oþere synnes ben meyntened, & holi lif of prestis & oþere men is dispised.

<sup>1</sup> omitted X.

<sup>2</sup> omitted X.



*Capitulum 12<sup>m</sup>.*

Prelatis also feren cristene men bi here false censures, as suspendinge, cursyng and enterdityng, þat þei kepe not goddis lawe & his ordynance; for whanne prestis wolden gladly lyue wel aftir þe gospel, & præche goddis lawe & dispise & distroie synne, þanne worldly prelates, for drede of here owen symonye & extorsions of pore men, comaunden prestis to præche not wiþ-uten here leue, & þanne prestis schullen neuere gete leue or ellis swere þat þei schal not præche ajenst þe grete synnes of prelatiſ. And iif prestis præchen trewely & frely þe gospel of crist & reprouen generally synne, þes emperours clerkis þat stryuen ajenst cristis lyuyng wolen somone hem fro contre to contre; & iif þei dwellen wiþ cristene peple & techen<sup>1</sup> hem goddis lawe & don not aftir here wrong heest, ¶ þei wolen suspenden pore prestis fro masse & prechyng & alle goddis seruyce, & curse hem & prisone hem bi þe kingis power; & so trewe prestis schullen be cursed & prisoned for þei don frely werkis of mercy & charite & comaundement of god, & leuen þe contrarie comaundement of a synful fool & in cas of a maistir deuyl of helle. ¶ And iif lordis wolen helpe pore prestis in riȝt of goddis lawe, & bryng proude worldly clerkis to mekenesse & pouert, as god comaundiþ hem in his lawe, þei schullen be suspendid from alle goddis seruyce and here londis entirditid & þei cursed & taken to prison iif þei stonden sadde in goddis cause, & þes feyned þeues seruen of þis, to forbede men to do goddis seruyce & his comaundement & profit of here soulis for feyned drede<sup>2</sup> of anticrist & so maken men more to dreden anticrist & his peynes, & in caas synful foolis & deuelys of helle, þan \*almyȝtty god in trinyte & his offense, & to lese þe blisse of heuene; & þus anticristis prelatiſ don more harm to cristene men & maken hem more to breke goddis hestis þan þe deuelis in helle, þat neuere weren men. but ajenst þes feyned censures men schulden ben armed wiþ seþ of þe

Prelates frighten men by false censures,

forbidding them to preach unless they swear not to preach against the sins of prelates.

Persecute true preachers.

If lords support true priests, their lands are put under interdict,

and they sent to prison.

\*[p. 84 MS.]

Men should withstand such cen-

<sup>1</sup> techem X.

<sup>2</sup> dredre X.

sure in God's gospel, þat þe more þat þei forþeden men do goddis wille, behalf.

þe more strong schulden þei be to do it; & drede not here curs, for þanne god blisseþ hem; & aʒenst bodely peyne be armed wiþ pacience & charite & hope of heuene ly blisse; & þan anticristis power schulde soone be brouȝt doun & holy writt knowen & kept & meyntened; but goddis lawe<sup>1</sup> is þis, þat prelatis pʀeche to synful men þe foulnesse of here gretee synnys and horrible peynes of helle, & hou soone þei may geten mercy of god in þe blisse of heuene for verrey contricion. And ȝif þei wolen not leue here opyn synnes for al þis, þanne lordis schulden ponysche here bodies in prison or by loos of catel, for þis is lordis office as petir & poul techen. Sumtyme men weren forboden of trewe pʀestis to vse & do sacramentis in open cursed lif, & þat is trewe suspendinge. But nowe goode men ben suspendid fro doying of goddis hestis til þat þei paien a gret tribut to anticrist or his officeris. But þo; a man be neuere so openly cursed of god he schal be suffred ȝif he wil paie a rente to anticrist or hise, pou; he neuere so foule dispise god & dampne his owne soule & dysceyue þe peple. & þus alle þes feyned censures ben anticristis panter & armes, to lette trewe men fro þe seruyce of god almyȝtly and to make men to forsake god in his lawe for drede of anticrist and fendis of helle.

Lords should punish those who will not leave their open sins.

Formerly men of evil life were forbidden to minister sacraments.

Now a priest may live as he likes if he will pay a rent.

### Capitulum 13<sup>m</sup>.

Indulgences.

Also prelatis disceyuen foule cristene men by feyned indulgences or pardons & robben hem cursedly of here money; for þei techen men þat for staciones of rome & for ȝeuyng of almes aftir synful mennes wille þei schullen haue þousandis of ȝeris of pardon, & also pardon wiþ-uten noumbre to mannys vndirstondyng. & þis pardon is forȝeuenesse or remysion of peynes whanne men ben verreyly contrit of alle here synnes bi vertue of cristis passion & martirdom, & holy merit is of seyntis þat þei diden more þan was nedful

Pardon from superfluous merits of saints

<sup>1</sup> omitted X.

for here owene blisse. but þis crist tauȝte neuere in al þe not taught by  
 gospel & neuere vsed it, neiþer petir ne poul or any oþer Christ or his  
 apostle of crist; & ȝit þei myȝten, couden, & weren in  
 most charite to teche & vse þis pardon ȝif þer had ben any  
 siche, for in crist was alle manere of good lore & good lif  
 & charite, & most aftir in his apostlis; & siþ crist fond &  
 tauȝtte \*al þat is nedful & profitable & he tauȝte not þis \*[p. 85 MS.]  
 pardon, þanne þis pardon nys neiþer nedful ne profitable.

¶ Also alle men þat ben in charite ben partyneris of cristis All men that are  
 passion, & of alle goode dedis fro þe bigynnyng of þe in charity are  
 world til þe last ende þer-of, bi þe most ryȝtful delyng of partakers of  
 ihū crist as moche as it is ryȝtful, & more schal no man Christ's passion.  
 haue for no grant of ony<sup>1</sup> creature of god; þan for þis popis  
 graunt or bischopis neuere þe more of pardon. þanne men  
 ben grete foolis þat bien þes bulles of pardon so dere, &  
 maken hem more bisy to geten hem þan to kepe þe hestis of  
 god & to ȝeue here almes to þe most pore & nedi neiþeris;  
 for it semeþ þat þei ben out of feiþ, hope & charite; for  
 þei tristen to haue more þank to do here almes aftir synful  
 mennus wille & techyng, ȝe to ryche houses or ryche men  
 þat han no nede, þan for to do here almes aftir cristis  
 techyng & to most nedy men. ¶ Also ȝif þe day of doom Men are great  
 come bi-fore þes þousand ȝeer of pardon come out, þanne fools to buy these  
 þes pardons ben false, for aftir þe dom schal be no purga- bulls.  
 torie; but no man wot hou soone þe doom schal come;  
 neþeles þe pope & his officeris in þes indulgences presumen  
 to ben euene wiþ god in knowyng certeynly þe comyng  
 of þe dom & in departyng of merit to whom þat hem  
 likiþ. But boþe þes ben enproprid to god, & þan it is  
 blasphemye for ony creature to take þis to hym as doþ þe  
 pope wiþ his meyne. ¶ Also it semeþ þat þe pope & his ben The pope is want-  
 out of charite ȝif þere dwelle ony soule in purgatorie, for ing in charity if  
 he may wiþ ful herte wiþ-uten ony oþer cost delyuere any one remains  
 hem out of purgatorie, & þei ben able to resceyue suche in purgatory.

helpe siþ þei ben in grace; þan ȝif he delyuere hem not out

<sup>1</sup> no X.; but corrected in margin.

of purgatorie him lackiþ charite, & þif he haue not power to delyuere alle þan is he out of charite & disceyuere of mannus soule, siþ he techiþ þat his gostly tresour es endles meche, & is neuere þe lesse þou; he partid it generally among alle.

Man cannot know what God's judgment is.

¶ Also it passeþ mannus knowynge what is goddis dom to suche soulis, þanne it semeþ a gret pride for a synful man to make hym certeyn & maistire of goddis dom þat he knowiþ not.

These pardons are given for money.

¶ Also þes pardons gon not for charite but for worldly drit as it semeþ, for þif pardon schulde be grauntid it schulde be

They should be given to make men better.

graunted for to make pees & charite, & not for to make discencion & werris, & o cristene man to alen his broþer; & for to stire men to kepe goddis hestis, not to do aftir singuler wille or worldly profyt of synful men þat seeken here owene worschipe or worldly wynnynge more þan sauynge of cristene soulis; & for to seie þe pater noster þat crist made hym self, & not for singuler preieres made of vs self \*for loue of an erþely kyng; but in al þis is þe contrarie don as men seyn in dede, wherefore it is al out of charite & þan it is nouȝt worþ. ¶ Also þif þis pardon be an heuenely þieste & gostly it schulde be ȝeuen frely as crist techiþ in þe gospel, & not for money ne worldly goodis ne fleshly fauour; but þif a riche man wol bie dere þe bulle, he schal haue a bulle of

\*[p. 86 MS.]

Pardon, as a spiritual gift, should be given freely.

pardon wiþ þousand ȝeris þou; he be cursed of god for his synful lif, & a pore bederede man þat haþ no money & may not traueile to rome or to suche anoþer place, he schal haue no pardon of þe pope, þou; he be holy & ful of charite: þan siþ þis pardon schulde be frely ȝouen, þif þer ony suche be, it

A rich man may buy a thousand years.

A poor bedrid man that can't go on pilgrimage gets none.

is þeste [&] roberie to take þus myche gold þerfore; but here ypocritis seyn þat þei taken no þing for pardon but for þe

They say that the payment is for the seal.

bulle þat is selid: certis a litel deed leed costiþ many þousand pond bi ȝere to oure pore lond, sikire þei disceyuen þe peple & iapen hem, for þei sillen afaat goos for litel or nouȝt, but þe garlek costiþ many shillyngis. ¶ Also þis feynd pardon

Our country pays thousands of pounds for a little lead.

They sell the gooses for nought and charge for the garlick.

disceyueþ many men, for riche men tristen to flee to heuene þerbi wiþ-uten payne & þerfore dreden synne þe lesse, & of verrey contricion & leuyng of synne & of doynge almes to

Pardons make rich men dread sin less.

most nedy men is lytil spoken of, for þif it were soþly told þis pardon schulde be sette at nouȝt. gret falanesse is þis to magnyfie þe popis power so myȝhil in purgatorie þat no man here can teche bi holy writt ne reson, siþ we seen in þis world þat a litel harlot dispiseþ þe pope & stroieþ his lordischepe, & ȝit he doþ al his myȝt, alle his witt, & alle his wille, to be vengid vpon sicke a pore harlot. þane it semeþ for many skillis þat þis feyned pardon is a sotil marchaundise of anticristis clerkis, to magnyfie her feyned power & to geten worldly goodis, & to make men drede not synne, but sikirly to walwe þer-inne as hogges; & merueile it is þat synful foolis doren graunte ony þing of meritis of seyntis; for al þat euere ony seynt dide may not brynge o soule to heuene wiþ-uten grace & myȝt of cristis passion, & alle meritis, þat ben medeful dedes, of alle seyntis but only cristis ben not euene worþ to þe ioie of heuene, as poul seiþ; & siþ god grauntiþ to eche man part of alle medeful dedis als mochel as it is worþi, no man schal haue more part of þes dedis for alle þes bulles, & neuere þe lasse þouȝ no man graunte sicke part ne sicke bullis; & þes feyned pardons maken men to tristen more in grauntynge of a synful man, & in cas of a denyl of helle, þan in þe riȝtfuleste graunt of houre lord ihū crist. almyȝtȝy god for his endeles mercy distroieþ þis pride, coueitise, ypocrisie & heresie \* of þis feyned pardon, & make men bisi to kepe his hestis & sette fully here triste in ihū crist. Amen.

Wrong thus to exaggerate the pope's power.

Pope's weakness on earth.

No saint by his merits can bring one soul to heaven.

God grants merit to men without regard to bulls.

\* of [p. 87 MS.]

### Capitulum 14<sup>m</sup>.

Prelatis also maken þe weie to heuene hardere þan crist made it, & so letten men to go to heuene & þer-fore ben cursed of god. For þei entren not hem self into þe kyngdom of heuene & letten hem þat wolden, as crist seiþ in þe gospel, for þei make many newe lawes of hem self, & chargen men to studie hem & kepe hem more þan þe gospel; & siþ þe gospel & holy writt is occupacion ynow; for men

Prelates make hard the way to heaven,

Matt. xxiii. 13.

by new laws of their own making.

in þis lif, þe more þat men be<sup>1</sup> occupied abouten manys lawis þat expounen not þe gospel, þe more þei ben drawen fro þe gospel & þe lesse knowen þat & þe worse kepen it.

They add new points to the creed—  
Mark xvi. 16.

¶ Also prelatiſ maken many newe poyntis of bileue, & seyn þat it<sup>2</sup> is not ynow; to bileue in ihū crist & to be cristened, as crist seiþ in þe gospel of mark, But ȝif a man bileue þat þe bischop of rome be heuyd of holy chirche. And certis þe apostlis of ihū crist constreynenden neuere ony man to bileue þis of hem self, & ȝit þei weren certeyn of here sauynge in heuene; hou schulde þan ony synful wrecche, þat wot neuere where he schal be dampnyd or sauyd, constreynen men to bileue þat he is heuyd of holy chirche? certis þei constreynen men sumtyme to bileue þat a deuyl of helle is heuyd of holy chirche, whanne þe bischop of rome schal be dampnyd for his cursed endynge in synne.

as the pope's headship of the church.

He may be a devil.

### Capitulum 15<sup>m</sup>.

Christ bade men to judge him by his works.

Also prelatiſ magnyfien hem self abouen ihū crist god and man. For ihū crist comaundid & tauȝte opynly þat men schulden not ȝeue credence to hym but ȝif he dede þe werkis of þe fadir of heuene. But oure prelatiſ chalengen þat we ȝeue credence to hem<sup>3</sup> where þei don wel or euyl. Also crist seiþ to þe iewis of him self þat þei schullen deme a riȝtful doom & not after þe face. And in his passion tyme crist bade a synful harlot & cursed to bere wittenesse of

John vii. 24.

Prelates say that their subjects ought not to judge them.

euyle in cas ȝif crist had seid eny euyle. But oure prelatiſ þat don euyle boþe in dede, speche & þouȝt, crien kenely þat sugetis schullen not deme hem, þouȝ þei don opynly aȝenst charite. also poul biddiþ þat his sugetis demen þat þing þat he seiþ after þat he was rauyschid in-to þe þridde heuene; but oure prelatiſ wolen not þat we deme here seiynge, þouȝ it be contrarie to goddis lawe opynly, & certis þis is þe deuyl cast of helle to distroie þe treuþe of holy writt & þe lif of ihū crist & his apostlis, and to coloure pride & coueitise

2 Cor. xii. 2.

<sup>1</sup> omitted X.

<sup>2</sup> omitted X.

<sup>3</sup> omitted X.

& symonye & extorsions as moche as euere þei wolen, for bi here cast men schullen not reproue hem þer-of, what synne euere þei don.

### Capitulum 16<sup>m</sup>.

Prelatis also constreynen men to \*cesse & do not þe wille & hestis of god, but ȝif þei han leue of goddis enemys, & in cas of deuelis of helle. For ȝif prestis wolen seie here masse & techen þe gospel in a bischopis diocese, a noon he schal be forboden but ȝif he haue leue of þat bischop, & he<sup>1</sup> schal paie comunly for þat leue myche money or ellis swere þat he schal not speke aȝenst grete synnes of þat bischop & oþere prestis & here falsnesse. And ȝit it is a grete werk of charite & mercy to teche men þe riȝtte weie to heuene, & þes men schullen nouȝt doo wiȝ-uten leue of þe bischop, þouȝ he be neuere so proud, neuere so coueitous & cursed for symonye & extorsions, & many tymes sich a bischop schal be dampnyd, & þanne, as crist seiȝ, he is a deuyl. þan it is verified þat a cristene man schal not do þe wille of god without leue of goddis enemye, & of a fend of helle; as ȝif þe leue & þe comaundement of god were not ynowȝ to don his wille, but ȝif a man haue leue of siche a cursed creature. And ȝif siche a cursed creature<sup>2</sup> seie nay, goddis wille schal ben vndon & his lawe & wille vnknownen and not kept. And þis is don for drede of loos of here worldly pride & coueitise, & of worldly lordischipis þat þei han aȝenst cristis lawe & his techynge & his owen lif and his apostlis; but þis forbedyng is colourid by holynesse, for, as prelati feynen, it is pretended that this is to stop poor priests preaching heresy. They call all they do not like heresy. The spirit of lies stirs them to hinder the knowledge of God's law.

pore prestis wolden teche heresie for þei knowen not goddis lawe; but certis þes prelati demen heresie alle þat is aȝenst here lykyng & lustis of here flech; & þei ben ful vnable to teche þe trenȝe of goddis lawe, for þei studien not þer aboute & lyuen contrarily þer-to; wherefore þe holy gost techiȝ hem not al soȝe, but þe spirit of lesyngis steriȝ hem to lette knowy[n]ge of goddis lawe & sauynge of soulis vnder colour

\*[p. 88 MS.]  
Prelates prevent men from doing the will of God,

As to say masse, or teach, without leave of the bishop,

though he may be a very devil.

It is pretended that this is to stop poor priests preaching heresy. They call all they do not like heresy.

The spirit of lies stirs them to hinder the knowledge of God's law.

<sup>1</sup> omitted X.

<sup>2</sup> omitted X.

of holynesse, for þei demen bi-fore þat men wolen teche heresie; as ȝif þei weren euene wiþ god knówunge mennys hertis. And ȝif pore men seyn þe soþe þat no man may aȝen seie, þan prelatiſ seyn þat it is <sup>1</sup>seyd for euyl entent & so hyndren þe treuþe & taken vp hem þe dom þat is <sup>2</sup>reseruyd to god him self, & þerfore þei ben blasphemers.

### Capitulum 17<sup>m</sup>.

Prelates refuse obedience and taxes to secular lords.

Christ paid tribute to the Emperor.

\*[p. 89 MS.]

As vicars of Christ they should give example of meekness;

But are most rebellious,

and maintain sin by their example.

Also prelatiſ distroien most þe obedience & mekenesse of goddis lawe, for þei seie þat þei owen not to be suget to secular lordis to paien hem taxis in helpe of þe comunes, & owen not to be amendid bi here sugetis of here opyn synnes, but only of þe pope þat is here souereyn; & he of no man in herþe for he is greteste of alle. for oure lord ihū crist was suget to þe heþene emperour & paided him tribute for hym & his chirche, & ȝit he hadde no secular lordischiþe ne plente of dymes, moche more schulden \* þes riche prelatiſ, þat han secular lordischiþe aȝenst goddis lawe & grete luelis & plente of worldly goodis, helpe þe kyng & þe lond to meyntene pore men in reste & charite. & siþ crist was most meke & most obediente to al men, And þes prelatiſ ben vikeris of crist to ȝeue ensauple of mekenesse, þei owen to be most meke & obedient to alle here sugetis; for bi goddis lawe eche man oweþ to be suget & obedient eche to oþere in þe drede of crist. Also in dede þei schewen most rebelte aȝenst god & cristene men, lyuynge in pride, coueitise, idelnesse, extorsions, lecherie, glotyne & wastynge of pore mennys gooddis, & þus þei ben lik to lucifer & ben anticristiſ, holdynge hem self more worþi þan euere was ihū crist god & man. And it semeþ þat þei techen here sugetis heresie bi here false open lif, for here lif schulde be bokis of <sup>3</sup>oþere sugetis vnder hem, & as bokes ben <sup>3</sup>false þat techen heresie, so ben þes prelatiſ heretikis þat techen & meyntenen synne bi here cursed ensauple ȝeuynge.

<sup>1</sup> omitted X.

<sup>2</sup> omitted X.

<sup>3-3</sup> This is added at the bottom of the page in a later hand, and sugetis is written suȝeines.



Capitulum 18<sup>m</sup>.

Prelatis also ben worse þan iewis þat naileden crist on þe cros, for þei pursuen crist in his membris for þei seyn þe treuþe aʒenst here cursed lif, & sclaudren hem wiþ lesingis, & cursen hem & prisonen hem & slen hem, algatis in wille. And, as crist seiþ, it is all on to dispise & pursue on þat seiþ þe treuþe of crist & to pursue crist god & man. And þis newe pursuyng of prelatiſ is don bi more sutil ypocrisie & after more benefice resceyued of cristis passion, & whanne it were most nede to haue helpe in goddis cause aʒenst anticristis clerkis<sup>1</sup> þat destroyen þe treuþe of cristis lif & his apostlis in word & dede; & ȝit prelatiſ resceyuen & axen greedely þat ilke money for whiche iust blood is spilt, þat þe iewis wolden not do; & ouer þis prelatiſ sillen cristene soulis to sathanas for money, & so in manere defoulen cristis blood & setten it at nouȝt; & bisien hem nyȝt & day hou þei may bi anticristis iurdiecion & feyned censures stoppe præstis, þat þei præchen not þe gospel to delyuere soulis out of þe deuelis bondis.

Prelates persecute Christ in his members,

and take greedily the money for which iust blood is spilt.

Capitulum 19<sup>m</sup>.

Prelatis also maken hem self most vnable to kepe þe gospel of crist bi here grete bysynesse abouten roten goodis, & bi pompe & boſt of þis world, for þei ben most bisi of alle men in þe world to geten worldly goodis bi purchase, & to holden hem bi false plee, & disdeyne to see a pore mannis riȝt & worche after good conscience, but ȝif ony man kaste to helpe pore men in here riȝt aʒenst grete prelatiſ he schal haue here enemyte, & be sclaudrid to þe kyng & grete lordis, & pursued bi false cautelis til he be vndon, ȝif þei may bi ony lesyng. so þat whanne þei schulden ben most wilful pore & præche þe gospel \* of cristis pouert & his apostlis, þei may not for schame, for sclaudryng of hem self, and lest þei maken here owen ypocrisie knowen to þe peple; & herefore þei

Prelates disable themselves from keeping Christ's law by their avarice.

Litigiousness.

Hunt down any one who supports poor men's rights against them.

\*[p. 90 MS.]

Are ashamed to preach the truth lest it reflect on them.

<sup>1</sup> omitted X.

hiden cristis pouert fro þe peple, & lien vpon hym cursedly to coloure here worldly lif; for here þouȝt, speche, cost & traueile is more aboute worldly goodis þan goddis lawe in studyng & techynge & holy lif of hem self & þe peple.

Pomp and splendour.

Slay men with their own hands.

They are Satan's knights.

And in worldly aray & wast meyne & grete corseris & clopis of gold & worldly armure þei passen erlis, & atteynen to kyngis aray in bataile to slee cristene men wiþ here owen cruel & cursed hondis; but hou may þei preche þe gospel of pacience, mekenesse, pees and charite in þis cursed vengauce takynge? certis þei ben sathanas knyȝtys, turned in-to angelis of liȝt bi name of preȝtod and religion, to disceyue cristene peple in feiþ, hope & charite. but woo to suche anticristis prelatis, þus blasphemynge crist & sclaudrynge cristene men.

### Capitulum 20<sup>m</sup>.

Prelates teach men to maintain them in their wickedness.

And to persecute poor priests.

False pardons.

Also prelatis techen & hiren lordis & comunes & clerkis to blaspheme god & dispise his lawe & ordynauce; for þei techen lordis & alle oþere men to meyntene hem in worldly lordschipis, pompe & pride, coueitise, extorsions, pilynge & robbynge of þe peple vnder colour of holy correccion. & notwiȝstondynge þat goddis lawe & ensauple of cristis pore life dampnen<sup>1</sup> seculer lordschipis in clerkis & coueitise & worldly lif, ȝit þei graunten pardon wiȝ-outen mesure & ȝouen grete benefices & huge tresour of gold & worldly fauour & sathanas blissyng to lordis, clerkis & comineris, for to meyntene anticristis worldly clerkis in þes synnes aȝenst god & his halwen, & for to pursue & sclandre & enprisone & slee & brenne pore preȝtis þat techen holy writt & cristis gospel of pouert & mekenesse aȝenst here worldly lif. & to þis ende þes wickid ydolatrours, worschiperis of false goddis, graunten to þes manquelleris out of bileue & charite pardons, part of massis & oþere preieris, ȝe to flee to heuene bi-fore þe bodi be cold, & þus blynde anticristis prelatis leden blynde lordis, clerkis & comunes to helle for coueitise & brekyng of goddis comaundementis.

<sup>1</sup> dampnem X.

*Capitulum 21<sup>m</sup>.*

Prelatis also setten more pris bi here owen tradicions, maade for to meyntene here pride & worldly wynnyng, þan bi þe gospel of ihū crist; for þei studien faste & techen here owene constitucions, & ponyschen men<sup>1</sup> sore ȝif þei don ouȝt aȝenst hem or kunnen hem not, but þei studien lital or nouȝt cristis gospel & lesse techen it, & recken lest þouȝ men kunnen not þe gospel ne kepen it not; but faste þei techen þe nede & þe anauntage & trowþe of here owen lawis, & seyn þat \*holy writt is hard, not so nedful as here owen lawes, but it is false to þe lettere, & men wityþ neuere what it meneþ. & þus þei seyn in dede þat newe lawes, maade in tyme þat sathanas is vnbounden of worldly prelatiſ ful of coueitise symonye & heresie, ben betere & trewere þan lawe of þe gospel, maad & tauȝt of ihū crist god & man; & on þis ypocrite manere þei seyn preuely þat fonnyd worldly heretikes ben wiser & trewere þan þe holy gost, þan crist & his apostlis; ȝee þat þes worldly clerkis ben wise & trewe & in grete charite, & god þe trinyte & ihū crist & his apostlis ben foolis, false & out of charite;<sup>2</sup> siþ þes worldly moldwarpis ful of symonye & heresie maken so open lawis so profitable & so trewe, & god wiþ his helperis makeþ derke lawis vnprofitable and vntrewe.

Prelates lay more stress on their own constitutions than on Christ's gospel.

\*[p. 91 MS.] They say holy writ is hard and not literally true.

Thus they make foolish heretics wiser than the Holy Ghost.

*Capitulum 22<sup>m</sup>.*

Also prelatiſ techen þat þer nys no þing leful in holy chirche in erþe wiþ-uten leue & confermyng of anticrist, & maken all þe chirche suȝet to hym; for þei seyn openly þat þer is no þing leffel among cristene men wiþ-uten leue of þe bischop of rome, þouȝ he be anticrist ful of symonye & heresie; for comunly of alle prestis he is most contrarie to crist boþe in lif & techynge, & he meynteneþ most synne bi preuylegies, exempciions & longe pless, & he is most

Prelates teach that nothing is lawful without leave of the pope,

who may be antichrist, for he is usually of all prelates the most contrary to Christ in life and teaching.

<sup>1</sup> more X.<sup>2</sup> & X. AA.

They say that a priest may not teach the gospel without leave of him or his.

That is, a priest may not fulfil God's commands without the leave of Christ's enemy.

\*[p. 92 MS.]

Thus men would be subject to antichrist more than to Christ.

proud aȝenst cristis mekenesse, most coueitous of worldly goodis & lordschipis aȝenst þe pouert of crist & his apostlis, & most idel in gostly werkis & occupied in worldly causes aȝenst crist besy traueyle & his apostlis in pręchyng of þe gospel, & most principale sillere of benefices & veyn indulgencis & sacramentis where crist comaundiþ men to ȝeue frely alle gostli<sup>1</sup> þingis as þei han frely rescueyued hem of god. & ȝit þes worldly prelatis feynen þat it is not lefful to a prest to teche cristis gospel frely wiþ-uten licence of hym or his prelatis vnder hym, þouȝ god comaundeþ prestis, bi open techyng & his lawe and opyn ensaunple of cristis lif, to teche þis; & so þei menen þat ȝif þis proude prest & contrarie to crist & his lawe sende not a cristene man<sup>2</sup> bi witnesse of his bullis or letteris of his lowere prelatis he may not fulfil þe hestis of god ne werkis of mercy; & so ȝif þis principal enemy of crist & his coueitous clerkis wolen lette a cristene man to kepe goddis hestis & poyntis of charite, he mot leue goddis comaundement vndon & obiche to hem at here wille, & þus þei menen þis ende þat cristene men may not come to heuene bi kepyng & holdyng of trewe feiþ & charite but ȝif anticrist & his worldly clerkis, ful of coueitise, symonye & heresie, ben meyntened in here olde pride & cursednesse aȝenst treuþe of god almyȝtty; for ellis, as þei feynen, þer may be no bischop no prest<sup>\*</sup> ne cristendom ne sacramentis; but certis þis is foule heresie & blasphemye, for herby cristene men ben suȝet to anticrist & his symonye & feyned censuris & to sathanas more þan to ihū crist & his lawe.

### Capitulum 23<sup>m</sup>.

Prelates stir up wars

to call attention from their own wickedness.

Prelatis also ben enemys of pees, conseilouris & meyn-tenouris of werris, & irreguler anementis god, & here preieris ben cursed; for þei dreden ȝif lordis weren in reste & pees þat þei schulden perceyue þe cursednesse of here symonye,

<sup>1</sup> omitted X.

<sup>2</sup> omitted X.

ypocrisie, coueitise, & robberie of here pore tenauntis, & suffre not *prelatis*<sup>1</sup> be worldly lordis & tirauntis, as þei ben now, & þerfore þei casten to occupie lordis in werria, and conseilen þer-to vnder colour of wisdom & charite þat þei may regne in here lustis & coueitise as hem lykeþ. for if þei weren trewe procuratouris of pees, þei schulden gladly & ioiefully coste alle here worldly lordschipis & here flesch & blood & bodily lif to make pees & charite amongis cristene men, & techen lordis and comunis in open sermons and confessions & priue conseillynge þe peryl of werria, & namely of wrongful werria, & hou harde it is to fytten in charite, & tellen openly & priuely þe goodnesse & profit of pees & reste, & hou men schulden not haue verray pees but bi holy lif & meyntenynge of treuþe & riȝtwisnesse & distroyng of wrong & synnes. but now þes worldly prelates ben cheef conseilours to werria for pride & coueitise, & ben present in here owene personis in costly array as kyngis, & meyntene many men of armes to slee cristene men in body, & þei hem self killen many þousand in soule & bodi be cursed ensauple of euyl lif & meyntenynge in synne for money, & bi cursed conseil priue & apert; & þerfore þei ben cursed of god & irreguler, & whanne þei preien to god &<sup>2</sup> holden vp here hondis ful of cristene blood, god seiþ bi þe prophete ysaie þat he wole not here hem ne resceyue here sacrifices, & bi þe prophete malachie god curseþ to here blissyngis, & in many places of holy writt. for þei don not here sacrifices bi mekenesse of herte & mornynge & compuncion for here synnes & þe peplis, but wiþ knackyng of newe song, as orgen or deschant & motetis of holouris, & wiþ worldly pride of costly vestymentis & opere ornamentis bouȝt wiþ pore mennus goodis, & suffren hem perische for meschef & laten pore men haue nakid sidis & dede wallis haue grete plente of wast gold.

They ought to preach peace,

but are chief counsellors to war, and fight in person.

They are cursed of God.

Isaiah. i. 15.

Malachi ii. 2.

They do their services not meekly but with fanciful singing and rich ornaments.

So the poor have naked sides, and dead walls have much gold.

<sup>1</sup> *prelatis* X.

<sup>2</sup> omitted X.

Capitulum 24<sup>m</sup>.

Prelates dis-  
credit Christ's  
order and life by  
their worldly life.

Their plate, rich  
food, and wine, fat  
horses, furs, and  
splendid retinue.  
\* [p. 93 MS.]

Grossetéte.

They teach  
wicked life.

Also prelatis distroien þe ordre & lif of crist & his apostlis bi here worldly lif & array & bost & pride, & bryngen þe peple in-to heresie of cristis pore lif; for þei leuen not as pore prestis aftir crist & his apostlis, but as lordis, þee kyngis or emperours, in shynynge vessel & delicat metis & wynes, \* in fatte hors & precious pellure & ryche cloþis & proude & lecherous squyeris & meyne, & þes vanytes wasten pore mennus goodis & suffren hem goo dailes whanne þei han nedis to pursue. & wiþ alle þis þei seyn þat þei lyuen in þe staat of cristis apostlis & ben here vikeris & successouris, & maken þe comune peple bileue þat crist & his apostlis lyueden þus; & siþ þe lif of prelatis is book & in ensaumple to opere sugetis, as lyncolne seiþ, þes prelates ben heretikes & maistris of heresie, þat þei techen to þe comunes bi here owen wickid lif þat is a bok to here sugetis, & þus for cristis pore lif & meke & traueilous is tauht a lordly lif, proud & veyn occupacion of worldynesse & vanyte of þis world.

Capitulum 25<sup>m</sup>.

Prelates send  
away money of  
the realm to  
aliens and  
enemies,

as first-fruits,  
and to buy pre-  
ment.

This is simony.

Sometimes the  
Court of Rome  
is our enemy.

Prelatis oure þis robben oure lond of mochil tresour, & senden it to aliens & enemys of oure rewme & bryngen aȝen goddis curs & heresie; for þei don not here spiritual offis aftir goddis lawe, & ȝit gredely gedren dymes & offryngis & procurasies, & senden moche gold coine<sup>1</sup> for þe firste fruytis, & to purchase & apropere to hem moo benefices, prouylegies & indulgences; & þis is þeste & symonye ȝif goddis lawe & mannis & reson be souȝt, & þe sillere of benefices & spiritual þingis & þe ȝeuere of gold for hem ben cursed of god & man & ben foule heretikis. & sumtyme þe court of rome his worldly aduersarie to oure lond, & namely in fauour of oure enemys; but more harme is of gostly ennemyte, whanne þei enuenuymen oure peple wiþ cursed symonye and meyn-tenynge & consent of synne bi blynde obedience. for ȝif

<sup>1</sup> senden moche gold to Rome AA.

any worldly prelat wole do any wrong aȝenst riȝt & reson, he schal geten a priueilege or exempcion or sentence of curs for his gold sent & spendid at rome, & moche gold goȝ out of oure lond bi longe pledynge at rome, & riȝt born a doun, & synne contyned<sup>1</sup> & meyntened, þat vnneȝis dar ony man speke þeraȝenst; and þus is oure lond robbid of gold, & curs & heresie brouȝt in, and synne longe meyntened, & riȝtwisnesse stoppid.

Prelates buy priuileges to help them to do wrong.  
Money sent to Rome for law-suits.

### Capitulum 26<sup>m</sup>.

Also prelatiſ seyn þat holy writt is not sufficient to reule holy chirche, & techeris þer-of ben not profitable to þe peple, but here owen statutis maade of synful foolis ben most nedful & techeris þer-of, And meyntenours of chydyng & strif ben most nedful & profitable to þe peple. for iȝif holy writt were ynow for gouernynge of þe chirche, it were veyn & vnresonable to occupie men wiȝ moo lawis, siȝ men ben now of feblere complexion & lasse wytti & of schortere lif þan men weren in olde tyme. & it is luciferis pride \* & more to seie þat techeris of mannys tradicions maade of synful foolis ben more profitable & nedeful to cristene peple þan techeris of þe gospel & goddis comaundementis; but þer is o cursed cause of alle þis seiynge; þei loue more here owen worldly wyynyng & pride & lustis þan wyynyng of soulis to blisse by mekenesse & holy lif. And here owen lawes and techeris þer-of meyntenen & procuren þis coueitise & lustis, & holy writt & trewe prechours þer-of dampnen al þis, & techen wilful pouert & mekenesse & gret traueile & penaunce of clerkis; & þer-fore þei comenden here owen lawes & here techeris, & putten goddis lawe & treue prechouris þer-of bihynde. & heere þei putten on crist boȝe defaute of witt & charite; for siȝ crist maade not the beste lawe for holy chirche, as þei feynen, & telde not whanne & of whom it schulde be maad, him lackid witt & charite, but certis þis his foule heresie putt on crist priuely for to meyntene here owen coueitise & pride.

Prelates say that Holy Writ is not enough, and that their statutes are more profitable.

Men weaker than of old time.  
\*[p. 94 MS.]

They say this for love of gain.

They accuse Christ of a want of knowledge or charity.

<sup>1</sup> conteyned X.

*Capitulum 27<sup>m</sup>.*

Prelates compel  
men to assent to  
their errors

by evil teachers  
and by threats.

They deceive  
lords to make  
them imprison  
true men.

Prelatis constreynen men of symple vnderstandyng to renne in-to errouris & to blaspheme god; for þei constreynen suche symple men to assente to here dampnacion of treupes of goddis lawe, bi multitude of worldly clerkis blynde þorou; coueitise & pride, & bi manas & drede of prisonyng and brennyng, & suffren not men to resten in holy writt & in þingis þat þei may understonde, but constreynen hem to assente to nowelries of newe doctours, þat leuen holy writt & reson & feynen dremes & myraclis to please coueitous clerkis & to greet weyn glorie for here witt, & þus þei bileuen blyndly in many poyntis aʒenst goddis doom. And ʒit þes prelatis desceyuen lordis & maken hem pursue & prisone trewe men þat wolen not assente to errouris ouer holy writt and reson. And þus þes prelatis ben anticristis turmentours of sathanas for to pursue & sle trewe prestis in goddis lawe, & maken lordis turmentours of þe fend to ponysche cristene men, for þei holden þe boundes of holy writt & meynutenen þe trewþe of cristis lif aʒenst worldly prelatis ful of coueitise & heresie.

*Capitulum 28<sup>m</sup>.*

Prelates stop  
men from study-  
ing holy writt  
and make them  
study traditions.

\*[p. 95 MS.]

Men have so  
much to do with  
learning these  
new laws, that  
they have no  
time to study  
God's law.

Also prelatis closen or stoppen þe weie to þe blisse of heuene & open þe brode weie to helle; for þei stoppen & letten men fro kunnyng & kepyng & techyng of holy writt, þat is entre & riȝt weie to þe blisse of heuene, & neden men to bisien hem aboute studyng & kepyng & techyng of synful mennys tradicions ful of errour, þat ben maad for pride & coueitise, & also to lerne pride & coueitise & worldly lif & to haunte & \*meyntene suche wrecchid worldly lif of clerkys, & þis is þe brode weie to helle. Sumtyme men hadden traueile & werke at þe ful to studie & kepe & teche goddis lawe bi-fore þat þes newe lawes of worldly clerkis weren brouȝt vp, & nowe men ben occupied aboute



lernynge & techyng of hem in alle here lif, þat vnneþe may þei loke & sauoure holy writt in here laste dayes; & he þat can not þes worldly statutis maad for singuler wille and coueitise is hoolden but a fool and vnable to teche & reule cristene peple, þou; he kunne and kepe & teche neuere so wel cristis gospel & goddis comaundementis. & to þis ende þes worldly moldwerpis taken keies of helle in stede of keies of þe kyngdom of heuenes, for þei taken ypocrisie & worldly tirauntrie & bostful worldly lif, & meyntenynge of synne bi fals pardon & fals absolucion & cursed preieris, & leuen kunynge & techynge of holy writt & edefyng of cristene soules to heuene by good ensauple of here holy lif.

These moles take the keys of hell instead of the keys of heaven.

### Capitulum 29<sup>m</sup>.

Prelatis also maken lordis *turmentouris* of sathanas to prisone cristene men for þei holden goddis lawe; for þei maken lordis to enprisonen men whanne þei dwellen fourti daies in sentence of curs, & here owene lawe techiþ opynly þat men schullen dwelle in curs bi al here lif vp payne of dampnacion, has whanne a man haþ weddid a womman sibbe to him in degree of *consanguinite* or kyn wiche<sup>1</sup> degree is forboden in holy writt, & haþ not witnesse ynowe to proue þis in *mannus* dom, þou; he knowe it neuere so certeynly, he schal be cursed in constorie & may not ryse out of þis curs, for þanne he schulde do wyttyngly aȝenst goddis heatis & his conscience, & þus þis man schal euere in þis lif be cursed for he wil not wyttyngly do aȝenst goddis comaundementis & his riȝt conscience. ¶ lord, what charite is it to prisone sich a man, & ȝit þes *anticristis* clerkis cursen men al day for money for techyng of goddis lawe & for werkis of mercy & riȝtwisnesse, & for þat þei wolen not assente to errouris aȝenst holy writt expressly & aȝenst reson. ¶ Lord god, hou schullen *anticristis* mynysters of riȝtwisnesse be

Prelates make lords imprison a man when he has been under excommunication forty days.

Case where a man ought to remain under curse by their own law.

They curse men for teaching God's law and for good works.

<sup>1</sup> omitted X.

Lords should  
make sure that  
the curse is just,  
and imprison till  
amendment, not  
for fines.

excused at þe day of dom, siþ þei enprison falsly trewe  
men bi fals disceit of worldly heretikys; þer-fore þes lordis  
schulden be certeyn þat þe curs were riȝtful, & þat þe man  
were endurid in synne & drede not god ne his vengauce,  
& þan ponyschep hym til he wolde drede god and amende  
his lif, & not til he wolde ȝeue money to anticristis clerkis  
at here wille.

### Capitulum 30<sup>m</sup>.

\*[p. 96 MS.]  
Prelates argue  
like apes and  
gluttons.

Also *prelati* disceyuen cristene men bi licknesse \* of apis  
& bi argumentis of glotones til þe peple breke goddis hestis  
& meytinen hem in here cursed lustis. For apis whanne  
þei seen a man don ony þing bi hem wolen assaie to don  
þe same dedis til þei ben perischid for defaute of crafte or  
kunnyng; & glotones arguen þus, siþ it is good to me to ete  
or drynke þus moche, And more mete & drynk is betere,  
þan it is betere to me to ete & drynk þus moche more; &  
bi þis colour þei cessen not til þei heten & drynkyne her  
legges & hondis out of myȝt & here heuyd out of witt & ben  
as dede hogges. þus faren þe worldly *prelati*. þei seyn,

Like apes they  
say, Since the  
people worship  
Peter and other  
apostles,

why should not  
they be wor-  
shipped, who are  
in the place of  
apostles.

They do not con-  
sider how the  
apostles came to  
this state,

and how differ-  
ently they come  
to it.

siþ þe peple schulden worschipe gregorii, petir & poule, &  
*opere* trewe apostlis of crist, & þei comen in þe staat of  
apostlis, þanne þe peple schulden worschipen hem þus moche.  
but þei taken no rewarde hou þes apostlis comen to þis staat,  
bi ordeynynge & chesyng of god & for holy lif & trewe  
seruyce þat þei diden to cristene peple, in trewe techynge  
of þe holy gospel boþe in word & dede; & hou þei comen  
to here staat by symonye, bi chesyng of worldly clerkis,  
& in cas quyke deuelis in flech & blood, & don<sup>1</sup> not here  
office but lyuen in pride, coueitise, robberie of þe peple, &  
in fleschly lustis þat cristis apostelis deden not. Also þei

They argue, too,  
The apostles had  
keys of heaven:

arguen þus, siþ petir & poul & *opere* apostlis of crist hadden  
keies of heuene & power to bynde & vnbynde synnes, whiche  
doynge was confermed in heuene, & we ben in þe staat &

<sup>1</sup> omitted X.

successouris of hem, þan we han þe same power; but þei we are their successors and have the same power.  
 loken litel þat mannus eleccion makij hem not in sich staat,  
 but chesyng of god & kunnyng of holy writt, & souereyn  
 traueile & holy lif, & techyng & meyntenyng of þe gospel,  
 & brennyng charite to deþe for goddis loue, & sauynge of  
 cristene soulis; & comunly þei ben fer fro alle þes goodnesse  
 & wlappid in pride & coueitise & moo synnes. Also þes Like gluttons  
 worldly moldwarpis arguen þus as glotons; siþ it is good they argue thus:  
 to prestis to haue worldly goodis for here necessarie lifode & It is good for  
 helynge, as poul techij & reson, & þanne þe more þe betre; enough for liveli-  
 til þei ben smyten in coueitise & occupacion of þis world, hood, then the  
 þat þei sauouren nouȝt of gostly þingis, but riot & pride & more the better.  
 roten muk of þis world. & ȝif it be good to haue holy writt  
 & presthod and knyȝthod and laboreris to serue god & reule  
 þe peple; þan it is betre to make moo newe lawis & moo  
 ordris in þe chirche, til þe lawe of god be forȝeten & newe  
 tradicions in excercise & newe ordris magnyfied more þanne  
 þe<sup>1</sup> clene ordre þat crist made himself; & bi þes iapis þei  
 disceyuen þe peple, & gedren to hem\* self þe goodis of þis \* [p. 97 MS.]  
 world & magnyfien himself, here ordris, & here lawes more  
 þan crist & his lawis, & maken þe peple to holden vp þis  
 ypocrisie & heresie.

### Capitulum 31<sup>m</sup>.

Prelates also spoilen lordis of here rentis bi dowyng of Prelates roblords  
 þe chirche, & lowe curatis bi appropriyng of parische chirchis by endowments,  
 & bi pencions & cost of here officeris, & þei robben þe pore curates by appro-  
 peple bi veyn priueylegies & feyned halwyng of churches, priations and  
 auteris and chircheȝerdis, & oþere sacramentis sold for money fees,  
 and by annuel rentis for lecherie & oþere synnes; & here- the poor by fees  
 fore þei may be wel licned to swolwis of þe see & helle, are like whirl-  
 þat resceyuen al þat þei may & ȝelden not aȝen; & þus þei all and return  
 þat schulden most forsake þe worlde & worldly coueitise & nothing.  
 vanyte ben most sette in þe world & leste coueiten heuene

<sup>1</sup> omitted X.

& gostly goodis; & þei þat schulden most lede þe peple to heuene, bi trewe techynge of holy writt & ensauple of wilful pouert & mekenesse & bisy traueile in praieris & deuocions & penaunce, leden þe peple to helle bi here worldly lawis, coueitise, pride & queyntise of þe world, & ydelnesse & glotonye & fleschly lustis; & hou þei robben þes parties it is open ynow, þerfore we moten telle of more ypocrisie lesse knowen.

### Capitulum 32<sup>m</sup>.

Prelates care more for their parks being broken than God's laws.

Also prelatiſ chargen more here park & br[e]kyngge þer-of þan goddis hestis & brekyngge of hem. ¶ For þei pursuen more & cruelliere for brekyngge of here parkis þan for brekyngge of goddis comaundementis to saue here soulis bi spiritual medecyne; & þei ben more bisy to loke þat here park be wel kepte þanne to loke þat goddis hestis<sup>1</sup> ben kepte of goddis peple; & þei receruen assoilyngge for brekyngge of here park to hem self, but þei ȝeuen assoilyngge for brekyngge of goddis hestis to eche parische prest or curat. For þei holden here park more derworþi to hem þan þe comaundementis of god, & seken more bisily here owen worldly worschipe and<sup>2</sup> couetise þan honour of god & sauynge of cristene soulis; & here is ydolatrie & heresie open ynow, & blasphemye of god among worldly & heþen men.

### Capitulum 33<sup>m</sup>.

Prelates by evil life in the highest state of the church hinder good life in Christendom.

Prelatis also entren vnder colour & studie of cristis apostlis & lyuen & teche contrariouſly to hem & don most harm to cristendom, ȝee more þan ony souden or sarsyn or oþer men of wrong bileue. ¶ For siþ þis stat is most wortþi in þe chirche, & þei lyuen so worldly & synfully þer-inne & turnen it vpsodon, þei distroien most þe goode lif of cristendom & techen most perilous heresye. And herefore þei

<sup>1</sup> omitted X.

<sup>2</sup> þan X

bicomen þe deuēlis iogelours to blynde mennus gostly eiȝen; þei maken men wene þat here worldly lif & cursed ys þe holy lif of cristis apostlis, & þus bryngen in errour & heresie in þe peple, & ben sathanas transfigurið in-to an aungel of liȝt, & verrefien þis word of holy writt, þat þei ben made a spectacle to angelis & men, but on euyl manere, where þei schulden ben \*a spectacle of angelis & men to loken onne \*<sup>[p. 98 MS.]</sup> with ioie for here stronge fyttynge aȝenst enemys of soule bi mekenesse, wilful pouert, & grete traueile in techynge of þe gospel, & suffrynge of peynes & deþ. þerfore in ensauple of cristene men to sue hem in þes poyntis þei ben a spectacle to angelis & men to wonder on here cursed pride, couetise & ydelnesse in gostly traueile, & cowardise in cristis bataile, & letten charite of cristene men bi here euyl ensauple, & þus in stede of cristis apostlis ben comen in viserid deuēlis, to disceyuen men in good lif & bryngen hem to sathanas here maister, & in <sup>1</sup> þis manere þei pleien þe pagyn of scottis; for as scottis token þe <sup>2</sup> skochen of armes of seynt george & here-bi traieden englichemen, so þes anticristis prelati taken name & staat of cristis apostlis, as ȝif þei wolden helpe & lede cristene men þe riȝte weie to heuene as þei diden, but here-bi þei betraien cristene men in-to synne by suyng of here techynge & cursed lif, & leden hem faste þe weie to helle.

Become devil's jugglers.

<sup>1</sup> Cor. iv. 9.

Instead of Christ's apostles we have masked devils,

who play tricks like the Scots when they took the scutcheon of St. George to surprise the English.

### Capitulum 34<sup>m</sup>.

Also prelati constreyne prestis to lese charite & blaspheme crist & disceyue his peple; for þei neden prestis to fytte & werre in here owen persone aȝenst cristene men, & here abouten spende pore mennys liflode for to hauen a veyn name of hardynesse & þank of lordis þat kunnen neiþer witt ne reson; for þei senden opyn comissions to alle curatis vnder here deuēlis iurdeccions bi vertue of mahoundis obedience & bi manas of þe kyngis power to make hem

Prelates compel priests to fight in person,

by commissions ordering them to be ready armed.

<sup>1</sup> omitted X.

<sup>2</sup> omitted X.

redi wiþ armure to werre iolily aȝenst cristene men. ¶ And here-by is armure of pacience and charite and holi preiere & trist in god putt away, & þe deuelis lawe of cruelte, enemyte & veyn trist in mannys myȝt brouȝt in. But goddis curs renneþ many þousand tyme wiþ al þis. & here-bi ben half dede men confortid to fittē & slee cristene men & rennen to helle hedly; & so þes worldly prelatis ben cheif capteyns & arraouris of sathanas bataillis to exile good lif & charite, but certis no tonge in þis lif may telle hou many soulis gon to helle bi þes cursede capteyns & anticristis iurdiccion & censures.

God's curse goes with this.

Worldly prelates are chief captains of Satan's army.

### Capitulum 35<sup>m</sup>.

Prelatis also ben weiward ypocritis, blynde lederis, swolwyngē þe grete cameile al hool & siyngē or clensyngē a lital gnatte; for þei resceyuen & purchasen bi gret ypocrisie seculer lordischipis, aȝenst goddis lawe olde & newe & ensaumple of cristis lif & his apostlis, as lefful, profytable & nedeful; & forsaken as venym matrimonye, þat is leffel bi holy writt, til newe vowis of contynense of worldli clerkis weren brouȝt in bi disceit of þe fend. For many prestis now kepen neiþer matrimonye ne charite, but defoulen wyues, maidenēs, widewis & nunnes in eche manere of lecherie, & children ben morþerid, & synne aȝenst kynde is not \*clene fled. For sathanas caste to purchase worldly honour & plente of worldly goodis & welfare & ydelnesse to ȝonge prestis, & dalliaunce wiþ wommen & priue rownyng; & is redy nyȝt & day to stere boþe partis to leccherie, & sumtyme to hyden here synne bi fals opis & morþeryng of children, & sumtyme hausten it opynly & schamen not þer-of; & her-bi heiȝe prelatis wynnē many þousand pondis in fewe ȝeris & holden grete housholde as lordis, & þus by þis ypocrisie in boþe poyntis ben lordis & prestis & comunēs encombrid, & goddis lawe dispisid & broken, & synnes gedrid in grete hordis.

Prelates condemn matrimony, which Christ allows.

Many priests live foul life.

\*[p. 99 MS.]

Sometimes sin is hid by perjury and child-murder.

Sometimes practised openly and without shame.

Prelates make money by it.

*Capitulum 36<sup>m</sup>.*

Also *prelatis* bi sotel ypocrisie horden & meynntenen here synne & oþere mennys; for þei seyn þat in here absence men may not speke aȝenst here open cursed synnes for synne of bachitynge & schlaundrynge; & þei ben so malicious & myȝtti in worldly power þat þei wolen suffre no man to speke aȝenst her synnes in here presence; & so þei wolden bi ypocrisie haue þis ende, þat no man schulde speke opynli & sadly aȝenst here cursednesse in no manere, but suffre hem wexe roten in here lustis & robbe þe peple & disceyue cristendom wiþ-outen ony letting; but certis þes anticristis clerkis lien falsly aȝenst cristis lore & profite of cristene men. For crist & his apostlis reprobueden pharisees & heroude & heretikis in here absence & to þe peple, as gospillis & pistles witnessen, to oure ensauple to do so wiþ charite & discrecion, & þei ben sclaunderid bi-fore god & his angelis & goode men in erþe bi here opyn cursed lif; & þo men þat reprouen bi charite & discrecion here opyn synnes helpen to amenden here synnes & don awei here sclaunder; but of sclaunder anemptis god & his angelis reckon þei not, but alle here care is last here ypocrisie bi knowen to lordis & myȝtty men, for drede of takyng away of here temporal lordischipis þat ben cause of here synful lyf. & þus þei ben cursed of god; for þat þing þat is verrey sclaunder þei clepen & rekenen as no sclaunder, & þat þing þat is no sclaunder but remedie þer aȝenst þei crien & clepen sclaunder; but alle þis is for þei wolden dwelle stille in robberyng of þe peple & here cursed lustis & sclaunder, & disceyue cristen men in good techyng and ensauple of holy lif.

Prelates shelter their sins and other men's.

They say it is slander to speak against them in their absence, and suffer no man to rebuke them in their presence.

Christ rebuked pharisees in their absence.

They care nothing about offence to God, but hide their hypocrisy from lords for fear of losing endowments.

*Capitulum 37<sup>m</sup>.*

*Prelatis* also blasphememen god & techen oþere men to don þe same; for þei lyuem hem self in pride & couetise & louen & norischen & meynntenen suche vicious folis, & haten

Prelates live in pomp and maintain vicious men,

and oppress  
virtuous men.

\*[p. 100 MS.]

They ought to  
put down wicked-  
ness in their  
retinue.

& dispisen mekenesse & wilful pouert, & so þei don vertuose men & oppressen hem; & þus þei conspiren aȝenst crist<sup>1</sup> & his vertuous lif & his meke seruauntis, & ben sathanas procuratouris to meyntene synful men in his seruyce. For certis þei ben cursed of god ȝif þei meyntenen wityngly & wilfully \*proude lordis & leccherours of here owne meynne in here housholde; for ȝif þei loueden god & þe soulis of here seruauntis þei schulden amende þis cursed lif or ellis putten hem out of here companye; but now for pride of hem self & wynnyng of drit þei holden forþ suche cursed meyne to sclandre oþere men. ¶ But as crist and poul witnessen, suche prelati ben cursed, & forsaken cristis feiþ, & ben werse þan heþen men þat neuere resceyueden cristendom.

### Capitulum 38<sup>m</sup>.

Prelates deceiue  
men by their  
novelties of  
pilgrimages and  
pardons.

They say that a  
wicked priest  
does not make  
the sacrament  
less effectual.

The prayers of a  
wicked priest  
are accursed.

By these pardons  
men's aims are  
misdirected.

Also prelati disceyuen cristene men in feiþ, hope & charite bi here nouelerie of massis at rome, at scala celi, & newe pardons & pilgrimages; for þei maken þe peple to bileue or triste þat ȝif a prest seye a masse at scala celi for a soule it schal onoon ben out of purgatorie, þouȝ god of his riȝtwisnesse ordeyne þat soule to abide þere fourty ȝere or mo, & þouȝ þe prest be cursed for symonye & pride; for as þei feynen falsly þe masse may not be peirid. certis þe sacrament may not be paired for synne of þe prest; but þe preiers of cursed prestis in þe masse ben cursed of god & his angelis, & certis a prest may be so cursed & in heresie þat he makij not þe sacrament. & god only knowij whanne his synne is in þat degre & whanne in lesse, but euere it is harmful to him þat makeþ þe sacrament vnworþily. & bi þes feyned pardons þe peple leueþ to do here almesse to pore nedy men enprisoned bi god himself & doþ it to ryche men & wasteris, & hopij to haue more þank of god þer-by þan to do it aftyr cristis owne techyng; & þes prelati chargen more folye

<sup>1</sup> omitted X.



avowis of siche pilgrimagis & brekyng of hem, þan þe strong comaundementis of god & brekyng of hem, & þus þe peple dredip<sup>1</sup> more to breke þis folie avowis maad of here owen errour þan to breke goddis comaundementis, & louen more here folye avowis to fulfille hem þan to fulfille goddis hestis; & þus þei ben disceyued bi þes nouelries in feiþ, hope & charite bi þes anticristis prelatiſ.

More stress laid on vows than on God's commandments.

### Capitulum 39<sup>m</sup>.

Prelatis also ben malicious foxis & rauschyng wolues, oppressyng pore curatis & annuel prestis in here iuridiccion; for whanne þe kyng & lordis axeden of grete prelatiſ subsidies & dymes for here temporaltes þei graunten hem so þat pore curatis & annueleris may be taxid at here setting; & so alle þe charge falliþ on here pore curatis, & opere & þe riche prelatiſ gon free or hellis wynnyn a porcion to hem self of goodis of here pore curatis. & þus whanne þei han robbid lordis bi ypocrisie of here temporal lordischipis sotyly & wrongfully þei rauschen þe goodis of pore prestis vnder hem; & þus þei don wrong to lordis, wrong to pore curatis, & to pore comunnes also; & bi þes seculer lordischipis þat þei han be ypocrisie þei ben \*emperours & tirauntis of opere prestis. & ȝit þei owen to be most meke of alle opere, and most bisi in studyng & techyng of holy writt & ensauple of alle goode manere of lif, boþe to cristene men & to heþene; but alle þes gostly goodis ben rausched & stolen from holy chirche, & contrarie synnes brouȝt in in stede of hem bi þis dowyng of prestis wiþ seculer lordischipis; & þis is werse þan rauschyng & stelyng of alle worldli goodis & aleyng of many þousand of mannis bodies, as soulis & vertues ben betre þan roten drit.

Prelates oppress poor curates and annual priests in assessing the taxes.

They wrong all classes.

[P. 101 MS.]

<sup>1</sup> drawip X.

Capitulum 40<sup>m</sup>.

Isaiah lvi. 10.

Prelates are dumb dogs, so stuffed with worldly goods that they do not bark.

They undertake to lead the people past dangerous ways and enemies,

but allow Christian souls to be strangled by wolves of hell.

They persecute those who would preach.

They have a compact with Satan to give him souls if he gives them wealth.

Also *prelatis* ben doumbe houndis þat may not berke in tyme of most nede but ben traitours to god & his peple; for þei ben so chokid wiþ talow of worldly goodis and occupacion abouten hem, þat þei may not preche þe gospel & warne þe peple of þe denelis disceitis; & siþ þei taken þe charge & offis to lede þe peple bi so perilous weies & enemyes bi trewe præchyng of þe gospel & ensaunple of here owne holy lif, & suffren cristene soulis be stranglid wiþ woluyes of helle þorou; here doumbnesse & occupiynge aboute þe world, þei ben cursed traitours to god & his peple; & ðit to fulfille þe fendis cruelte þei pursuen & cursen ðif ony pore præst wole preche freli cristis gospel & delyuere cristene soulis oute of þe fendis hondis & leden hem þe riȝtte weie to heuene. alle cristene men schulden crie out on þis false treson & fendis malice &, as crist seiþ in þe gospel, casten hem out of cristene mennus companye for here olde heresies & cursed disceit of cristene soulis; for þei han maad a præue couenaunt wiþ sathanas here maister, þat he schal haue soulis of here feyned iurdiccion so þat þei haue here worldly pride & coueitise & ydelnesse & fleschly lustis at here wille: but woo to suche traitours of cristene peple.

Capitulum 41<sup>m</sup>.

Worldly prelates crucify Christ spiritually,

when they give cure of souls to worldly fools.

Crisostom.

Austyn.

Bernard.

ðit worldly *prelatis* gostly don crist on þe cros & sleen his prophetis & his apostlis; for þei don cristis holy lif & techynge, & so in a manere crist hym self, on þe cros of lesyngis & bitraien him to heþene men whanne þei þeuen cure of soulis to worldly foolis, werse þan ben heþene houndis. And so þei don crist on þe cros of vnkyndenesse & dispit, And hereby dispisen hym more þan diden iewis nailynge crist on bodili cros. and seynt ion crisostom, or wiþ þe gildene mouþ, & seynt austyn witnessen plenerly þis sentence; & bernard seiþ þat a man þat synneþ opynly

aȝenst goddis hestis & ȝeneȝ cursed ensauple to oþere men  
 dispisiȝ<sup>1</sup> more god & doȝ more wrong to hym þan iewis  
 whanne þei naileden him bodely on þe cros. For crist louede  
 more cristene men<sup>2</sup> soulis þan his owen bodily lif; & þis  
 cursed man drawiȝ fro crist alle soulis als moche as in him  
 is, & þe iewis drowyn fro him his bodily lif þat he louede  
 lasse; & þei alen his prophetis & apostlis,\* whanne þei do  
 cursedly aȝenst here techynge & maken it fals as moche as  
 þei kunne: þis sentence witnessiȝ ion crisostom vpon þe  
 gospel of seynt matheu; & þus þei sillen crist & bitraien  
 hym for money whanne þei forsaken þe treuȝe of holy writt  
 & holy lif for worldly honour & coueitise, & ambrose & bede  
 witnessen þis poynt.

And do more  
 wrong to him  
 than did the  
 Jewe.

\*[p. 102 MS.]

They slay apos-  
 tles, etc., when  
 they do against  
 their teaching.  
 Crisostom.

Ambrose.  
 Bede.

## Capitulum 42.

Prelatis blasphemem aȝenst þe holy gost; for þei quenchen  
 his ȝiftis & suffren not cristene men to teche goddis peple  
 wiȝ sicke ȝiftis, but maken hem to waste þes precious ȝiftis;  
 and so as to here entent & to here dampnacion þei quenchen  
 þe holy gost. For in here wille þei distroien his werkis,  
 & þe synne is demed bi þe entent, þouȝ þe ende come not  
 forȝ but be lettid bi goddis myȝt. For whanne þei ben  
 vnable bi ignoraunce & wickid lif to teche cristene peple  
 goddis lawe, þei wollen not suffre trewe men teche frely  
 cristis gospel wiȝ-uten here leue & lettris, þouȝ trewe men  
 ben neuere so mochil charged & stired of god to præche his  
 gospel. but þei don þis for þei wolden haue money for here  
 lettris & swerynge þat men not præche aȝenst here synnes,  
 þouȝ þei ben neuere so opyn cursed traitours of god & his  
 peple; as men gessen þat veyn religious don to haue leue  
 of þes goddis traitours to sewe fablis, cronyelis, & lesyngis  
 for to robbe þe pore peple aftir-ward bi clamouse beggynge,  
 dampnyd bi goddis lawe; & þus þei ȝeuen leue to sathanas  
 præschours for to præche fablis & flaterynge & lesyngis, & to

Prelates quench  
 the gifts of the  
 spirit by not  
 allowing men to  
 use such gifts.

Forbid to teach  
 Christ's gospel  
 without their  
 leave,  
 which they give  
 only for money  
 and oaths not to  
 attack their sin.

Thus friars get  
 leave to preach  
 fables.

<sup>1</sup> dispeseȝ X.

<sup>2</sup> omitted AA.

Craft of their  
proceedings.

In fact they com-  
mand that no  
true man shall  
preach the gospel.

disceyue þe peple in feiþ & good lif & robbe hem of here worldly goodis, & to putten blasphemye vpon crist bi here opyn beggyng & letten cristis prechours to preche frely þe gospel þat wole not flatere but seyn þe soþ to eche man & eche staat aftir goddis lawe. but bi suche ypocrisie þei letten þus prechyng of cristis gospel, last lordis & comunes perceyuen here falsnesse, þei forbeden not vtterly þat men schulden not preche þe gospel, but þat men schulden not preche wiþ-uten here leue; & siþ þei ben ful of coueitise, symonye, pride, extorsions & opere falsnesse, þei wolen þeue to no man leue þat þei supposen wole seie þe soþe & not spare, & so in entente & dede þei comaunden þat no trewe man schal preche þe gospel. & bi þis þei casten to ende in here coueitise, symonye & robberie & meynthyng of anticristis chirohe, & it is to drede last þei enden in þis blasphemye aȝenst þe holy gost.

### Capitulum 43<sup>m</sup>.

Prelates blas-  
pheme against  
the Father in pre-  
tending to powers  
reserved to him.  
They pretend to  
absolve,

while they are  
only messengers  
to say that God  
absolves for con-  
trition.

\*[p. 103 MS.]

They lay more  
weight upon their  
absolution than  
God's.

ȝit worldly prelatis blasphemem aȝenst god þe fadir of heuene; for þei taken vpon hem power þat is specyaly & onely reserued to god; þat is assoilyng of synnes & ful remission of hem; for þei taken on hem principal assoilyng of synnes & maken þe peple to bileue so; whanne þei haue only assoilyng as \* vikeris or massageris to witnesse to þe peple þat god assoiliþ for contricion, & ellis neiþer angele ne man ne god hym self assoiliþ but ȝif þe synnere be contrit; þat is fully haue sorowe for his synnes, & haue wille raþere to suffre los of catel & worldly frendischipe & honour & bodely deþ þan to do wityngly aȝenst goddis comaundement & wille; & þei chargen more here owen assoilyng þan assoillyng of god, for ȝif a man come to here schrifte & sacramentis þei assoilen hym & maken siker þou; þe man lie vpon hym self & be not assoilid of god; & þou; a man be neuere so treuly assoilid of god for his entre sorwe of synne & charite þat he haþ now to god, þei seyn þat he his

dampnable but þif he be assoilid of hem þif he haue space þer-to, pou; þei ben cursed heretikis & enemyes of crist & his peple. & þus þei taken lital reward to god whanne he seiþ, what euere tyme a synful man haþ so epteire sorowe for his synnes he schal be saaf. þes *prelatis* schulden *preche* They should preach contrition and the danger of shrift without repentance. þis contricion & mercy of god & ioies of heuene, & þe peril of schrifte wiþ-outen repentaunce, & foulnesse of synnes, & grete peynes of helle, & riȝtwisnesse of god to make þe peple to flee synne & kepe trewly goddis comaundementis, & not disceyuen hem bi here owene power of assoilynge, ne bi fals pardon ne fals preieris & oþer nouelries bi side goddis lawe. of þes þre & fourty errouris & heresies may We have seen three and forty errors of prelates. men see hou euele *prelatis* disceyuen cristendom. For of hem & non oþere is þis speche, & hou þei ben cause of werris & euele lif in þe peple, and of here dampnacion. God for his endles myȝt and mercy amende þes errouris and May God amend them. oþere, þif it be his wille. Amen.

## V.

## SPECULUM DE ANTICHRISTO.

I HAVE little doubt that this tract is by Wyclif; it seems to me to bear the stamp of genuineness in style as in matter. The assertion of free-will on p. 110 may surprise some who know how prominent a place was held by predestination in Wyclif's theological system, but it will be seen that in dealing with the next point of Antichrist and his clerks, predestination is treated as a recognized truth. This double-sided assertion of doctrine is usual with Wyclif, who declares in plain terms *Cum prædeterminatione et præscientia stat libertas arbitrii* (see Lechler, I. 509).

The tract seems to be early in date, belonging to a time when the poor priests were already causing scandal, but when no violent measures had been taken to repress them. It must have been written before Wyclif developed his doctrine of the Eucharist, or he could hardly have mentioned the mass as he does on p. 112, without any reference to the falsity of transubstantiation.

I have retained the title, though not found in either MS., for the sake of distinction from No. XVII.

Copied from the Corpus MS. X. and collated with the Dublin MS. AA.

## SUMMARY.

Antichrist and his clerks object to preaching—

- I. That it causes dissension, and that Christian men should seek peace and charity.  
To which true men say that Christ has bidden them to preach, and that preaching does more good than harm.
- II. That preaching is against charity, because it hardens enemies. It is better to pray for them.  
True men cite Christ's example. Some men are saved through preaching; others made better for a time. Besides in all assemblies there are some good men who profit.
- III. That preaching can do nothing for men who are ordained by God either to perish or be saved.  
True men say that God ordains men to be saved through preaching; that men have free will, and God will give them grace if they desire it.
- IV. That prayer is more profitable than preaching.  
True men say that preaching is better than praying by mouth. Christ commanded preaching, but not matins or evensong. It is uncharitable for a man to wrap himself in contemplation when he might be teaching others. Yet priests are to pray devoutly.

*Speculum de Antichristo.*

Hou anticrist & his clerkis feren trewe prestis fro  
prechyng of cristis gospel bi foure disceitis.

First þei seyn þat prechyng of þe gospel makij discencion  
& enemyte, & siþ cristene men schulde make pees &  
charite, as þe gospel seiþ, þei schulden cesse of prechyng,  
siþ þer comeþ more harm þan good þer-of. Here trewe men  
seyn þat crist cam in-to þis world not to make pees of synful  
men to lyuen in here fleschly lustis & worldly ioie at here  
lykyng, but to departe<sup>1</sup> hem fro synful lif bi þe gospel, þat  
is clepid swerd of þe holy gost. & þouȝ luciferis children  
ben wode & aleen hem self bi steryng of here fadir for  
enemyte & here owen cruel hertis, jif cristene men schullen  
not cesse to do þe<sup>2</sup> comaundement & honour of god & poyntis  
of charite to here breþren; for crist & his apostlis leften not  
prechyng of þe gospel, & jif þe deuelis lymes maden dis-  
cencion & grucehyng & fyttyng aȝenst hem And goode  
men reseceyunge cristis gospel, to ȝene vs ensaunple to laste  
trewe in prechyng þouȝ anticristis clerkis grucehen. & þus  
cristene men schulde make verrey \*pees bitwene god &  
cristene soulis bi trewe kepyng of his hestis, & distroie  
fals pees of cursed men and don here traueile to amende hem  
for ellis þei failleden in charite. For bi þis sotil ypocrisie  
anticrist wolde quenche & owtlaue holy writt & make alle  
men dampnyd; for he wolde heuere stire summe of his  
seruauntis & stryue & debate for prechyng of goddis word,  
& þus schulde no man knowe goddis word bi prechyng.  
And certis jif ony man preche in grace þer comeþ more good  
þer-of þan alle fendis lymes may don harm, þouȝ many  
þousand sathanas children ben deppere dampnyd for here  
rebelte aȝenst god & his gracious techyng.

Antichrist and  
his clerks say  
that preaching  
should be stop-  
ped,  
first, because it  
disturbs peace.

Christ's peace is  
not that men  
should live at  
ease in their lusts.

Lucifer's children  
may be mad,

yet Christians  
must fulfil God's  
orders,

which are to be  
true in preaching.  
\*[p. 104 MS.]

Antichrist would  
else soon stop  
preaching by  
stirring up strife  
against it.

If a man preach  
in grace it does  
good,

though Satan's  
children may be  
deeper damned.

<sup>1</sup> do parte X.

<sup>2</sup> omitted AA.

Secondly, Antichrist's clerks say that men should cease from preaching lest they harden their enemies.

Ezekiel iii. 26.

Matthew vii. 6.

We ought to pray for our enemies as Christ did on the cross and St. Stephen,

who suffered wilfully to give us example.

Through preaching more are saved and fewer damned.

Sometimes men are led to amend for a while,

and they do good works by nature which will lessen their pain in hell.

In a gathering of people there are generally some good.

¶ *Þe secunde tyme*<sup>1</sup> *þei seyn þat men schulden cesse of prechyng for charite of here enemyes. For bi prechyng here enemyes be stired to hate & mansleyng of holy prechouris & not amendid. for þere ben many þousand þat schullen ben dampnyd & not leue here synne for ony prechyng, but more dampnid for þei heren goddis word & don not þer-aftir. And for þis charite seiþ god to þe prophete þat he schal make his tounge*<sup>2</sup> *cleue faste to þe roof of his mouþ, for þe peple is þus hard aȝenst god & his techyng. And þus comaundeþ crist þat men schullen not ȝeue holy þingis to hondis & putten precious perlis to hoggis, & god biddeþ to his prechour þat he speke not þere goddis word where is noon heryng.*

¶ *Here trewe men seyn þat þei schulden loue more god & cristene soulis þan here owene temporal lif, And þerfore techiþ goddis lawe to here enemyes & preie for hem hertly til þei weren dede, as crist dide on þe cros & his apostlis to here deþ & namely seynt stenene. And ȝit þei weren cōteyn þat here enemyes schulden slen hem, þerfore, to teche vs þat, þei suffreden wilfully to ȝeue vs ensaumple to sue hem in þis. & þouȝ men schullen algatis be dampnyd ȝit it helpiþ hem þat goddis word is prechid, for þer-by moo men ben sauȝd & fewere dampnyd & so lesse peyne to hem algatis. And ȝit sumtyme þei han compuncion & leuen here synnes long tyme & ben in grace & charite for a tyme, þat is betre þan alle þis world, ȝe to hem; & god ȝeueþ to eche man a free wille to chese good or euyl & god is redi to ȝeue hem grace ȝif þei wolen resceyuen it; & ȝit þei done here-by*

*many goode dedis of kynde & for hem schullen haue moche reward in þis world at þe laste & lesse peyne in helle, and it*<sup>3</sup> *is gret vengauce of god whanne he wiþ-drawiþ prechyng fro a comynalte. For þei ben not worþi to here goddis word & þerfore þei schullen be deppere dampnyed; and where a gedryng of peple is summe comynly ben goode, & for hem princpally men prechen goddis word & not for houndis þat berken aȝenst god & his lawis, ne for swyn þat baþen hem in*

<sup>1</sup> omitted AA.

<sup>2</sup> omitted AA.

<sup>3</sup> ȝit AA.



synne & wolle neuere leuen hem for drede of peyne ne hope<sup>1</sup> of blisse. And if prechours \*weren certein þat alle a comynalte wolden not here goddis word þei wolden not preche þere but goo to oþer peple, as crist biddiþ, for þei schullen not fayle in o place or oþere of summe good men til þe day of dome come.

\*[p. 105 MS.]  
If preachers knew there were none who would listen they would go elsewhere.

¶ Þe þridde tyme þei seyn þat goode men schulden be sauýd þou; no prechyng be, for þei may not perische, as god seiþ. And summe wickid men schullen neuere come to blisse for no prechyng in erþe. ¶ Here seyn trewe men þat as god haþ ordeyned goode men to blisse, so god haþ ordeyned hem to come to blisse bi prechyng & kepyng of goddis word; and so as þei schullen nedis come to blisse, so þei moten nedis here & kepe goddis hestis, & herof serueþ prechyng to hem; and summe wickid men now schullen be conuertid bi goddis grace & heryng of his word. And who knoweþ þe mesure of goddis mercy, to whom heryng of goddis word schal þus profite? eche man schal hope to come to heuene & enforce hym to here & fulfille goddis word, for siþ eche man haþ a free wille & chesying of good & euyl, no man schal be sauýd but he þat willefully hereþ and endeles kepiþ goddis hestis, and no man schal be dampnyd but he þat wilfully & endeles brekiþ goddis comaundementis, & forsakiþ þus & blasphemeth god. & heryng of goddis word & grace to kepen it, frely þouyn of god to man but if he wilfully dispise it, is riȝt weie to askape þis peril & come to endeles blisse; & herefore synful<sup>2</sup> men owen wiþ alle manere mekenesse & reuerence & deuocion heren goddis word & grucchen not ne stryue aȝenst prechyng of cristis gospel.

Thirdly, Antichrist uses the argument from predestination.

True men say that God ordains good men to blisse; but only through preaching and keeping his word.

Every man is to hope to come to heaven.

A man is saved or damned as he wilfully keeps or breaks God's behests.

¶ Þe firþe tyme þei seyn þat men schulden cesse of prechyng & ȝeuen hem<sup>4</sup> to holy preiers & contemplacion for þat helpeþ more cristene men & is betre. ¶ Trewe men seyn boldly þat trewe prechyng is betre þan preiynge bi mouþe, ȝe þou; it come of herte & clene deuocioun, & it edifieþ more þe peple; & þerfore crist comaundid specialy

Fourthly, Antichrist says that men should leave preaching and give themselves to prayer.

Preaching is better than praying; it edifies more.

<sup>1</sup> op X. corrected into 'hope' by a later hand.

<sup>2</sup> omitted AA.

<sup>3</sup> omitted X.

<sup>4</sup> omitted X.

his apostlis & disciplis to preche þe gospel, & not to close hem in cloistris ne chirchis ne stones to preie þus. And þerfore ysaie seied woo is to me for I was stille. And poul seiþ: woo is to me if I preche not þe gospel. & god seiþ<sup>1</sup> to þe prophete, if he schew not to þe synful man<sup>2</sup> his synnys he schal be dampnyd þerfore. Jerom seiþ as myche as innocent lif profitiþ bi merit & holynesse, so moche it harmeþ if it aȝenstonde nouȝt<sup>3</sup> wicked enemys of goddis lawe. And gregori seiþ, þat men of gret kunnyng & vertuous lif þat chesen stilnesse & desert for loue of contemplacion ben giltif of as many soulis as þei myȝtten saue bi techynge & dwellynge in þe world; & þus prechyng is algatis best. neþeles deuout preiere of men of good lif is good in cōteyn tyme, but it is aȝenst charite for prestis to preie euere more and no tyme to preche; siþ crist chargiþ prestis more for to preche þe gospel þan to seie masse or matynes, for he ne spekiþ not of matynes ne euensong opynly, \* ne manere of masse now vsed, but only of þe sacrament; but he comaundiþ to prestis for to preche þe gospel bi-fore his deþ and aftir.

And þerfore þe grete clerk lincolne proueþ þat trewe prechyng of þe gospel passiþ alle oþere goode werkis þat man doþ in erþe; & newe doctours, ȝe of mannys lawe, seyn þat prechyng passeþ þe masse in nyne profites. & þus seiþ poul þat god sent hym for to preche þe gospel & not to cristene men; and ion þe ewangelist seiþ, if a man see his broþer haue nede & close his mercy fro him haþ not charite. moche more if men ben in nede of soule þer is no charite in prestis but if þei techen hem goddis comaundementis if þei han kunnyng &<sup>4</sup> leiser þer-to; & ihū seiþ þat men schullen be dampnyd if þei failen in bodily werkis of mercy, þat is prechyng, ordeyned to hem. & þus prestis may not cesse of prechyng for suche preiynge, for þan þei leften þe betre þing, & to hem grettere comaundement, & deden þe lesse & lesse worþi, & þus þei weren out of charite; & þanne here preieris schulden not ben acceptable to god, for þei suden

<sup>1</sup> omitted X.    <sup>2</sup> omitted X.    <sup>3</sup> omitted X.    <sup>4</sup> omitted X.

Isaiah vi. 8.  
1 Cor ix. 16.

Ezekiel iii. 17.

Jerome;

Gregory.

[p. 106 MS.]  
Christ never  
speaks of matins  
or euensong,  
but he commands  
priests to preach.

Grossetete.

1 Cor. i. 17.

1 John iii. 17.

Christ says men  
shall be damned  
who fail in  
works of mercy.

Preaching is  
such.

If they neglect it  
they are out of  
charity, and then  
their prayers are  
vain.

not crist þat cam from heuene to saue soulis bi præchyng of  
 þe gospel. lord, what charite is it to a kunnyng man to  
 chese his owene contemplacion in reste, & suffre oþere men What charity is  
 it in a wise man  
 to wrap himself  
 in contemplation  
 while other men  
 go to hell for  
 want of teaching!  
 goo to helle for bregyng of goddis hestis, whanne he may  
 lytly teche hem & gete more þank of god in litil techyng  
 þan bi longe tyme in suche preieris. þerfore prestis schulden  
 studie holy writt & kepe it in here owen lif, & teche it oþere Yet priests are  
 to pray devoutly.  
 men trewely & frely, & þat is best & most charite. And in  
 corteyn tymes preie most<sup>1</sup> deuoutly & haue sorowe for here  
 synnes & oþere mennys. And þan þei schullen be as þe  
 firmament ouer litel sterris in comparison of oþere seyntis in  
 heuene. God brynge vs alle to þat glorious blisse for his  
 endeles mercy. Amen.

<sup>1</sup> omitted AA.

## VI.

## OF CLERKS POSSESSIONERS.

I HESITATE to pronounce an opinion as to the authorship of this tract. In expression it often resembles IV. and VII., but it has points of likeness to others which I cannot assign to the same hand. The mention of the voice heard at the first endowment of the Church (Chap. ix.), and the reference to the parallel between the three estates and the persons of the Trinity (see opening of Chapters xxxi. xxxii. xxxiii.), connect it with No. XXVI.

There are touches of irony (*e.g.* Chap. viii.) which are like Wyclif, and the phrase "Antichrist's martyrs" (Chap. x.) is applied to the "irreligious that have possessions," in a tract on the Seven Works of Mercy, which is probably genuine (S. E. W., III. 171).

If the tract be Wyclif's, we may date it rather before 1380. The friars are already a bad set who "bear the banner" for subtlety and sham poverty, but they are not yet the habitual adversaries whom Wyclif cannot refrain from attacking.

Copied from the Corpus MS. X. and collated with the Dublin MS. AA.

## SUMMARY.

- CHAP. I. Clerks possessioners destroy priesthood, knighthood, and the commonalty. Priesthood, by giving themselves to worldly business, by appropriation and its consequences, by luxurious life and neglect of preaching. Knighthood, by taking into amortisement lands which should sustain knights to govern the people. The commons by depriving them of the services of priests and knights, by oppression in rents and fines, and by wasteful expenditure.
- II. They say by their deeds that Christ's example is insufficient.
  - III. They disobey God, and teach that lords may not amend them, nor commons withdraw their tithes.
  - IV. They set their rules above Christ's, and punish breaking them more severely than idle swearing.
  - V. They shelter themselves under the names of saints, but live wickedly.
  - VI. They tell lies about saints to colour their own worldly life.
  - VII. They get goods under pretence of spending them in alms and spend them on pomp.
  - VIII. They take upon themselves heavier burdens than did Christ, since they add worldly lordship to the duties of the priesthood; and of these conflicting calls they attend most to the unworthy.
  - IX. Secular lordships in the church lead to simony, and wealth of the orders brings men to them for ease and luxurious life.
  - X. The possessioners are Antichrist's martyrs, dead to holiness, who will spend money and life to maintain their worldly possessions.

- CHAP. XI.** They preach seldom, and then for show, and hinder those who would truly preach the gospel.
- XII.** Monks and canons profess a rule of community of goods, yet they hold property.
- XIII.** They hold rules made by sinful men more perfect than those made by Christ, letting a monk become a friar, while he may not become a simple priest.
- XIV.** They care more for the praise of men than for the praise of God.
- XV.** They bind themselves to contradictories, to be dead to the world, and to do worldly business at command of the abbot.
- XVI.** They set the worse above the better, man's rule above Christ's; and if any will leave their order for a better life, they persecute him.
- XVII.** Their wasteful use of goods belonging to the poor, in dress that is too costly and much too large and loose.
- XVIII.** They engross to themselves all the good books, and will neither lend nor use them.
- XIX.** They give hospitality only to the rich and oppress the poor.
- XX.** They visit widows and orphans, but only to get their property.
- XXI.** They mislead lords into persecuting God's servants.
- XXII.** They claim licence to commit crime, by denying the right of the civil power to deprive them of property.
- XXIII.** They make men leave the study of holy things to attend to worldly business.
- XXIV.** They are insatiable, trying to get all property into their dead hands.
- XXV.** They are quick to plead in the courts, and, beside, are ready to damn those who deny their demands.
- XXVI.** They incite to war and so slay men.
- XXVII.** They oppress the meek and uphold the proud.
- XXVIII.** They pretend to watch, but sleep more than other men.
- XXIX.** They inveigle young children into their orders.
- XXX.** Their deceits as to special prayer.
- XXXI.** They persecute Christ in the persons of his true disciples.
- XXXII.** They blaspheme against the Holy Ghost by stopping preaching.
- XXXIII.** They blaspheme the Father by preventing lords from maintaining God's ordinance as to the clergy.
- XXXIV.** They do away with the rule, on which they are founded, of abstinence, poverty and labour.
- XXXV.** They are strong thieves who rob the church of the spiritual goods of poverty, simplicity, and meekness.
- XXXVI.** They mislead lords, interpreting the oath to maintain the church as upholding them in their possessions even if wrongful.
- XXXVII.** They are heretics, but they bring charges of heresy against true preachers to blind the people.
- XXXVIII.** They accuse true preachers of stirring up strife, but it is themselves who are in fault.
- XXXIX.** They care more that respect should be paid to them than to God, and, like the Jews, persecute for fear of losing their possessions and honour.
- XL.** They get all lordships into their hands, but will not pay taxes.

þis is of clerkis possessioneris.

### Capitulum primum.

\*[p. 107 MS.]  
Possessioners de-  
stroy priesthood,  
knighthood, and  
commons.

How they should  
live as priests.

By worldly pos-  
sessions they are  
turned to worldly  
business in place  
of devotion.

They take bene-  
fices by appro-  
priation,

and do nothing  
for the parish-  
ioners,

but put in a vicar  
at low pay.

Thus wise clerks  
are kept out of  
benefices,

almsdoing stop-  
ped,

poor children not  
sent to school.

They make  
money by masses;

set no example of  
holy life,

but retire into  
cloisters to live  
at their ease.

\*Clerkis possessioneris fordon presthod, knyȝthod & comineris ;  
for þei taken þe ordre of presthod & bynden hem to kepe  
þis<sup>1</sup> ordre & holi lif & techynge of goddis peple aftir cristis  
lif & his apostlis, & specialy in verrey mekenesse & wilful  
pouert & bisi traueile in techynge of goddis lawe & wilful  
deþ suffrynge þerfore. But bi þes worldly possessions and  
lordischipis þei ben turned to pompe & pride & coueitise &  
grete bisynesse of worldly ples & worldly festis & seculer  
lawis, þat deuocion & holy meditacion & studyynge & techynge  
of cristis holy gospel is forȝeten, & discencion among cristene  
men brouȝt in, & meyntenynge of wrongis & oppressynge  
of pore men bi here worldly power and cautelis holden vp.  
also þei taken benefices wiȝ cure bi appropriacion, þat is maad  
bi fals suggestion & symonye, & techen not þe parischenes  
goddis lawe ne mynystre hem sacramentis ne releuen pore  
men wiȝ residue of tipes & offrynges. But setten þer a viker  
or a parische preest for litel cost, þouȝ he be vnable boȝe of  
kunynge and lif to reule his owene soule, & for pouert of  
benefis he may not go to scole, ne lerne at hom for bisynesse  
of newe syngynge & gedrynge of tyȝes & mynystre of  
sacramentis & oþere occupacions. & þus wise clerkis ben  
putt out fro benefices þat myȝten, couden and wolden teche  
þe peple þe gospel & goddis hestis, & blynde lederis ful of  
coueitise, lecherie & oþere synnes brouȝt in; & almes doynge  
to pore men of þe parische & hospitalite & fyndynge of pore  
children to scole & so clergie aftirward ben outlawid. also  
þei taken þe ordre of presthod to seie massis for money, &  
whanne þei schulden be gostly liȝt of þe world bi opyn  
ensample of holy lif & trewe prechyng of holy writt, as  
crist comaundid to alle his apostlis & disciplis, þei hiden  
hem self in gay cloistris & lyuen in lustis of flech & glotonye,

<sup>1</sup> his X.

<sup>2</sup> in AA.

drounkenesse & ydelnesse & aleep. & as þei feynen þei ben exempt from prechyng, þat crist comaundeþ to prestis, bi profession maad to synful foolis & in cas to sathanas þat techeþ hem þe contrarie of goddis comaundementis; & þif ony such religious be stirid bi charite & conscience to goo to cristene peple & preche hem goddis lawe he schal be lettid bi anticristis obedience vp payne of dedly synne & prisonynge & sumtyme of bodely deþ. & þus þes possessioneris, & namely religious, leuen goddis comaundement & \*werkis of mercy & charite vndon for obedience of synful men, And distroien presthod & trewe techynge & holi lif of þe peple in eche degree. ¶ Also þei distroien knyȝthod bi wiles of þe fend, for þei<sup>1</sup> han grete lordischipis amortised to hem; bi whiche lordschipis knyȝtis schulden be susteyned to gouerne þe peple & þei moten now faile boþe in noumbre & power; & þis amortisynge comeþ in bi ypocrisie of preiynge be mouþ þat is preised of hem more þan prechyng of þe gospel; but certis þis is<sup>2</sup> merueile, for none of alle þes þat preien þus whot where his preiynge schal turne in-to his owene dampnacion, and þan is it litel worþ to opere synful men; & almyȝtti god seiþ þat þe sacrifices of wickid men ben abhominable and that he schal curse to here blissynge; & þe preire of þat man þat turneþ away his erris to here not goddis lawe is abhominable or cursed; &<sup>3</sup> þanne siþ god comaundiþ so often in his lawe boþe olde & newe þat clerkis ne schulden haue non secular lordischipis & þei hauen so many, & so faste meynutenen hem, here preynge is cursed & abhominable. And þif seynt austyn, seynt gregory & seynt bernard & opere seyntis & reson wiþ manere of lyuynge of þes proude possessioneris ben wel souȝt in matere of preiynge, þere wole seue a sentence of grete wepyng & mornynge, schewynge how men ben disceyued bi ypocritis preire boþe in feiþ hope & charite & worldely goodis & pees & reste. for þif a lord or a laborer loue betere god þan þes veyn religious & proude & lecherous possessioneris, þe lewid manys preiere is betere

Their luxury.

They claim to be exempt from preaching.

If any of them is moved to preach he is stopped by his obedience,

on pain of prison or even death.

[p. 108 MS.]

Thus they destroy priesthood.

And they destroy knighthood by having great lordships amortised to them, by which knights ought to be maintained.

This is done by pretence of praying.

Prov. xv. 8.

Prov. xxviii. 9.

God commands that the clergy should hold no lordships.

If a layman love God better than these religious do, his prayer is more worth.

<sup>1</sup> omitted X.<sup>2</sup> omitted X.<sup>3</sup> omitted AA.

þan alle here crynge & knackyng; & certis it were rapere  
 Lordes had better hire them not to say masse.  
 Austyn.  
 Gregory.  
 Jerome.  
 'Seynt' bede.  
 Austyn's example.  
 Possessioners destroy the commons by preventing good teaching and good government;  
 \* [p. 109 MS.]  
 by oppression in collecting rents and fines;  
 by wrongful litigation;  
 and by waste in pomp and gluttony.

almes to lordis to hire suche proude clerkis to seie neiþer  
 masse ne matines in þis cursed lif þan to holde & to meyntene  
 hem in þis manere preiyng; for her lyf<sup>1</sup> is blasphemye vnto  
 god, as austyn seiþ; & þei stiren god of treuþe rapere to  
 vengauce þan to mercy, as seynt gregori seiþ. And þerfore  
 seynt ierom criede & wrot to his deþ þat clerkis schulden  
 lyue on dymes & offrynges þat is goddis part & not haue  
 seculer lordischipis ne worldly riches, but in pouert sue  
 cristis cros: & seynt bede wrot to þe<sup>2</sup> erchebisshop of þork  
 þat ȝifte of kynges whanne þei ȝauen temporaltes to clerkis  
 was most fool ȝeuyng, & telliþ many harmes comyng  
 þer-of; & þerfore whanne seynt austyn sey<sup>3</sup> his clerkis  
 wexe proude for litel rente þat þei hadden he priede þe  
 peple of his cite to taken þe rentis aȝen and suffre hem  
 lyue on goddis part, þat ben tiþes & offrynges, as þe holy  
 martir possidonye writtiþ of seynt austynes lif. Þanne siþ  
 trewe techyng of curatis is leid down by apropiacion of  
 parische chirches, & knyȝthod bi amortesyng of temporal-  
 tees is mochel distroied, & þe pore peple hard piled bi  
 coueitouse clerkis opynly; it sueþ þat þes proude posses-  
 sioneris distroien þe comunnes of þe lond, siþ þei fordon trewe  
 techyng bi curatis & clerkis & good \*gouernaile bi knyȝttis,  
 & ben cruel in gedryng of here rentis & mercymentis more  
 þan lordis wolden, and ȝeuen ensaumpel of pride & coueitise  
 & wrongful meyntenynge of worldly plees aȝenst riȝt & good  
 conscience, & letten almes of curatis, & wasten pore mennys  
 lifode in pride & glotonye & worldly array more þan grete  
 lordis may wel atteynen to.

## Capitulum 2<sup>m</sup>.

Possessioners say by their acts that Christ's example is insufficient.

Also þes possessioneris seyn in dede þat cristis lif & en-  
 saumpel þer-of is insufficient & lif sikerere<sup>4</sup> bi worldly lawes  
 is betre; for þei forsaken pore lif & meke aftir crist & his

<sup>1</sup> omitted X.<sup>2</sup> omitted X.<sup>3</sup> seiþ X.<sup>4</sup> sikere X.



apostlis, & taken worldly sykernesse for þe betre; & her<sup>1</sup> þei blasphememen crist & ben out of riȝt feiþ. And ȝif þei witten þat cristis lyf<sup>2</sup> and trewe<sup>3</sup> lif of clerkis ensaumplid þer-aftir is best & most esy & most siker for þe soule, þei ben oute of charite to forsake þe best tauȝt [&] ensaumplid of crist, and to take a lif ordeyned of synful foolis & coueitouse of worldly pride & name & auer; & ȝif þei meyntenen stifly þis errour þei ben stronge heretikis.

### Capitulum 3<sup>m</sup>.

Proude possessioners ben *traitours* of god, of lordis & of þe comune peple. þei ben *traitours* of god, for þei distroien his ordynauce þat he made for clerkis, & in stede of mekenesse & wilful pouert & discrete penaunce brengen in coueitise, pride & wombe ioie and ydelnesse. & þei bryngen lordis<sup>4</sup> in þis errour of bileue, þat þei ben in dette to meyntenen hem in þis worldly lif, & þat lordis may not mayntene cristis ordynauce in clerkis for drede of anticristis curs & brekyng of here oþ bi whiche þei ben sworne to meyntene holy chirche; for þat þat is þe fendis chire[he], þat ben proude clerkis & coueitouse, þei clepen holy chirche to turnen alle þing vpsodoun as anticristis disciplis. & þat þat is holy chirche, þat ben trewe techeris of cristis mekenesse, wilful pouert & gostly traueile & meyntenours of cristis ordynauce, þei clepen heretikis & pursuen hem to þe deþ worse þan don heþene men, for no man schulde be hardi to teche & meyntene holy writt aȝenst here cursed lif. & þei bryngen comunen in þis errour, þat ȝif þei taken ony þing preuely or apertly fro anticristis chirche & his clerkis þei schullen be cursed & prisoned & dampnyd in helle; ȝe, þou; þes worldly coueitouse clerkis lyuen neuere so opynly aȝenst goddis lawe, & techen opynly cursed heresie. & þei techen þe comune peple þat þei schullen haue goddis blissyng & blisse of heuene ȝif þei paien treuly here tiþes & offryngis to hem, whanne þei lyuen in opyn lecherie & coueitise & don no þing here

Possessioners traitors to God, to lords and commons.

To God, by destroying his ordinance.

To lords, by saying that lords may not enforce Christ's laws on the clergy.

Persecute true teachers.

They teach commons that they must not withhold any payments from Antichrist's church.

<sup>1</sup> per AA.    <sup>2</sup> omitted X.    <sup>3</sup> treule X.    <sup>4</sup> omitted X.    <sup>5</sup> omitted X.

gostly office, but bi word & ensaunple of euyl lif leden þe peple to helle.

### Capitulum 4<sup>m</sup>.

They care more for rules of men than for rules of Christ.

\*[p. 110 MS.]

A priest or monk is punished more for breaking statutes than for profane swearing.

Also þes possessioners setten more pris bi reulis of synful men þan bi reulis of ihū crist god & man; for þei taken reulis of synful men as benetis & opere popis and holden hem more perfit þan þe olene reule of crist. & þei cha[r]gen more to breke suche tradiciouns \*maad of synful men þan to breke þe comaundementis of god & poyntis of charite; & for to proue þis, loke where a prest or monk schal ben hardere ponyschid for brekyng of þe popis lawe or of benetis reule, þe, for brekyng of here owene statutis, þan for ydel aweryng of herte & bonys of crist & brekyng of þe holy day; & here-bi may men see where þes possessioners louen & dreden more goddis hestis or synful mennys tradicions.

### Capitulum 5<sup>m</sup>.

They shelter themselves under the name of saints,

and liue most unsaintly.

þit þes possessioners entren vnder colour of seyntis & lyuen alle aȝenst þes seyntis; for þei comen in vnder colour of seynt benet & seynt austyn to lyue in mekenesse & pouert & bi labour of here hondis for her lifode, and bi ypocrisie þei rennen in-to pride, coueitise, worldly worschipe & welfare & idelnesse, & ben wode whanne men tellen þe soþe of cristis gospel & his pore lif & þe soþe of here owene reule & profession; for bi þis techyng here ypocrise and lesyngis schulde be knowen, & þei be turned to here first ground or ellis forsaken al. & þis wheren grete peyne for proude men & delicat; & þerfore þei maken a scheld of ypocrisie & worldly frendschipe aȝenst þis treuþe.

### Capitulum 6<sup>m</sup>.

They slander the saints to justify their own false pride.

Also þes proude possessioners lien on seyntis & sclaunderen hem wiþ worldly lif to coloure þer-by here owene false pride; for þei writen þat þis is benetis lif & thomas of canterburies,

whanne þei lyueden & endeden in contrarie manere. And þei bryngen forþ poyntis of here worldynesse whanne þei diden aȝenst holy lif & techynge of crist, & hiden here grete sorowe & penaunce þat þei diden for s[i]ch wildenessis; & alle þis is for þei wolden coloure here owene synne bi þes seyntis & maken þe peple wene þat þes seyntis camen to heuene bi þis mirþe of worldly lyuynges & likynge of here flesh; & þus þei brengen cristene<sup>1</sup> peple in errour aȝenst þe feiþ bi lesyngis putt on seyntis.

They bring out the worldly deeds which saints did,

and hide their repentance.

### Capitulum 7<sup>m</sup>.

Þes proude possessioners ben þeues & heretikis; for þei comen bi false menys as ypocrisie & lesyngis to þes grete lordischipes & bi colour to spende hem in almes of pore men, but þei wasten hem in glotony & pompe & pride & worldly gaynesse, as pelure & costelewe<sup>2</sup> cloþis & proude alitterede squerys & haukis & hondis & mynstralis & ryche men; & bi colour þat crist was þus worldly lord, þerfore þei schulden haue þus seculer lordischipis bi heritage of crist as his most worþi seruauantis; but crist seiþ in þe gospel of seynt ion þat his kyngdom is not of þis world, & hadde not bi worldly lordischipis where onne to resten his owene hed; þerfore it is heresie to putten þis seculer lordischipe on crist, & herbi disceyuen cristene men in feiþ & worldly goodis, & maken hem to meyntenen clerkis in here<sup>3</sup> heresie.

They get possessions under pretence of spending them in alms,

and waste them in gluttony and gay clothes, and attendants, hawks, hounds, and minstrels.

John xviii. 26.

### Capitulum 8<sup>m</sup>.

Also þes ypocrit is possessionerschargen hem self more þan crist<sup>\*</sup> and his apostelis wolden or myȝtten, & wittingly take þe werse & leuen þe betre. For bi als moche as þei haue seculer possessions more þan crist & his apostelis hadden þei ben bi þat bounden þe more, & þei ben bounden to holy lif & trewe techynge bi presthod in as mochil as þei may þerfore; & þei taken bisynesse of þe world & leuen studynges &

They take more burdens upon themselves than Christ and the apostles, [p. 111 MS.]

in worldly business,

<sup>1</sup> cristis AA.    <sup>2</sup> costelewo X.    <sup>3</sup> his X (corrected by a later hand).

techynge of holy writt & deuocioun in preiere & þynkyng  
 of heuenely swettenesse; & þei chesen rapere to lyue vnder  
 and in rules of their orders; of synful obedience & profession maad to worldly foolis þan  
 to lyue bi forne of þe gospel in þat fredom þat crist þaf to  
 prestis. & þerfore þei ben many times nedid & bi ypocrisie  
 so they leave God's commands undone, disceyued to leue goddis hestis vndon & to performe þe  
 wrongful biddynge of anticrist; & bi þis feyned obedience  
 is strif & enuye brouȝt in and pride & worldly lordischipe  
 and thus rise from good to evil, meyntened in dede men; & þus þei risen fro vertue to  
 synne, fro mekenes to pride, fro wilful pouert to coueitise  
 & lordischipe, fro grete penaunce & gostly traueile to glotonye  
 & ydelnesse.

### Capitulum 9<sup>m</sup>.

These secular lordships bring simony and covetousness.

þes secular lordschippis in clerkis bryngen<sup>1</sup> in symonye, coueitise & glotonye & ydolatrie, þat is worschippyng of false goddis; for bi cause of þis lordschippis men comen to grete prelacies & oþere degres of þe chirche bi money & worldly

Great prelacies are got by money, lawisuits, and fighting.

fauour & pledynge & fittyng, where þei schulden come to hem bi mekenesse and holy lif & bisy traueile in studyng & techynge of goddis lawe; & feyned religious possessioners comen to þes ordris for sikernes of worldly welfare & pride

The religious join their order for pride and ease.

& eise of body, where þe schulden come to hem to be dede to þe world & to lyuen in penaunce &<sup>2</sup> streit pouert as cristis apostlis, & þus þei suen þis holy staat of pouert & penaunce for worldly riches & wombe ioie. And herfore þei ben ful of symonye & heresie, as reson & lawe techen, & þei wasten moche good in ryot & glotonye & pledynde & meyntenyng of wrongis aȝenst pore gentil men & comunes. And siȝ al þes wastid goodis ben pore mennus lifode, as ierom & lawe

They waste money in riot and lawisuits.

techen, & he þat defraudeþ pore men þer-of is a man of blood spild, þes possessioners ben manleeris & irreguler & cursed of god; & siȝ coueitise & glotonye ben seruage of mauwmetrie,

Thus they defraud the poor and are guilty of bloodshed.

Colossians iii. 5.

as poul seiȝ, þes possessioners honouren false goddis. for þes skillis & many mo þe angel seyð ful soȝe whanne þe chirche

The angel that cried when the

<sup>1</sup> brengynne X.

<sup>2</sup> of X.

was dowid þat þis day is venym sched in-to þe chirche; for þei þat schulden be most meke & wilful pore & in most deuocion & myrrour of alle vertues to worldly men ben now turned in-to luciferis pride & sathanas coueitise and anticristis ypocrisie & ydelnesse, & ben myrrour of alle synnes, & no tonge in þis lif can telle þe harmes her-of.

### Capitulum 10<sup>m</sup>.

ȝit þes proude possessioners ben anticristis martiris, for þei <sup>possessioners are Antichrist's martyrs. [p. 112 MS.]</sup> ben reised bi hym fro deþ of<sup>1</sup> worldlynesse and vanyte to lif of lordis and werris & falsnesse; for in here profession þei ben holden dede to þe world & vanyte &<sup>2</sup> likyng þer-of. <sup>They should be dead to the world,</sup> But in desiryng & holdyng seculer lordischipis & worldly honour & delicat mete & drynk & gaye cloþis þei schewen in dede þat þei ben riȝt freisch in bodely lif, but I suppose <sup>but they show themselves fresh enough in bodily life,</sup> þat þei ben dede to holynesse & penaunce & profityng to oþere men; & namely þei schewen þis reisyng in pledyng & werryng in here owene persones, & in counseilyng oþere <sup>but are dead to holiness.</sup> men to werre on cristene men for worldly goodis; for þat þei don more cruelly þan worldly lordis, as men knowen of pletyng & conseilyng to werris. <sup>For in lawsuits and in stirring up to war they are worse than lay lords.</sup> þerfore it semeþ to summe men þat þei feynen hem dede to gete pray of worldly lordischipis & riches; as þe fox feyneþ hym dede til<sup>3</sup> briddis comen to his tounge, & þanne he schewiþ hym on lyue deuouryng & swelwyng of hem; & þus þei ben dede to profityng of oþere men & here temporaltees ben mortesaid, þat is confermyd in þis deþ, for þei comen neuere to seculer men ȝif þei may, þouȝ þei ben getyn bi neuere so fals title & aȝenst conscience; for þei wolen not see mennys riȝt, ne worsche aftir good<sup>4</sup> conscience, but bosten of þousand markis & þousand poundis þat þei wolen coste in plee bi-fore þat þei lesen ony fote of lond; & of suche religious wrecchis seiþ Robert grosted þat siche on is a dede careyne gon out of his sepulcre wlappid wiþ cloþis of mornyng,<sup>5</sup> dryuen & stirid

They feign death for prey, as the fox does to catch birds.

They boast how much they will spend in law.

Grosted.

<sup>1</sup> or X.

<sup>2</sup> of X.

<sup>3</sup> to X.

<sup>4</sup> omitted X.

<sup>5</sup> morynge X.

They will spend money and life to maintain their worldly life, but will do nothing to maintain Christ's truth.

Romans viii. 13.

of þe deuyl among men. And for þis worldly lif & coueitise þei wolen coste & die to meyntene it; but for to meyntene þe treuþe of cristis lif in mekenesse & pouert & bisi traueile in prechyng þe gospel þei wolen not traueile, but rapere pursue hem to deþ þat traueilen for þis holy lif; & þus þei lyuen in delices of þe world & here flech, & þerfore þei ben dede to god as poul seiþ, & so þei lyuen anticristis lif & meyntene þat to here deþ aȝenst cristis lif and lawe & techeris þer-of.

### Capitulum 11<sup>m</sup>.

They stop true men from preaching the gospel.

They are so occupied with the world and with their new customs, that they preach seldom,

and then stories and poetry to get credit for cleverness,

but nothing of Christ's gospel,

and hinder those that would preach it by bulls and persecution,  
\*[p. 113 MS.]

from fear that Christ's example and their departure from it should be known.

þit proude possessioners ben anticristis, for þei letten trewe men to preche þe gospel of ihū crist & suffren not þe peple knowe goddis lawe bi whiche þei schulden be sauȝd. For prestis þus dowid ben so occupied aboute þe world and newe seruyce and song & feyned obedience to worldly foolis þat þei may not studie & preche goddis lawe in contre to cristis peple. ¶ And ȝif þei preche selde whanne þei prechen cronycelis & poisies & newe fyndynges<sup>1</sup> of hem self, & maken false comendaciones of dede men for to geten a name of reyn sotilte & worldly þank, & leuen to preche cristis gospel and his lywyng; & ȝif oþere men wolen treuly & frely preche þe gospel & dispise synne, as crist comaundeþ, þes proude possessioneris<sup>2</sup> letten hem bi cautelis of anticristis censuris & worldly power & selaundrynge & prisonyng, & dryuen hem \*out of londe & ellis brennen hem ȝif þei may. & þis is for drede leeste cristis pore lif & meke & traueilous & peyneful be knowen, & hou clerkis & namely religious ben bounden to holde sich pore lif & meke & peyneful in<sup>3</sup> resonable abstynence, & traueile in<sup>4</sup> studiynge & prechyng of holy writt, & ellis as crist seiþ þei schulde be put out & dispised of men; for bi þis prechyng here worldly lif & coueitise schulde away & penaunce & traueyle come aȝen.

<sup>1</sup> feyndyngis AA.    <sup>2</sup> possioners X.    <sup>3</sup> and X.    <sup>4</sup> and X.

Capitulum 12<sup>m</sup>.

þes proude possessioners ben rotid in lesyngis aȝenst crist & his trewþe, for as seynt bernard & anselme seyn monkis & chanons ben bounden to þe same lif þat pore men of ierusalem helden after sendyng down of þe holy gost. And þei selden<sup>1</sup> her possessions & putten þe pris to alle cristene in comyn conuertid & þer was no nedy man amongis hem. For it was ȝouen to eche man as<sup>2</sup> it was nede, & non of hem seide þat ony þing was his owene; but alle þingis weren in comune to hem. but monkis & chanons appropren alle þingis to hem self & not to comunete of cristene men; & þes possessioners seyn in word þat alle þingis ben comune, but in dede þei han proprete & stryuen & pleden þerfore; ȝit seynt ierom & anselm seyn þat þe croune of clerkis crieth<sup>3</sup> pouert, & here clopinge crieth honeste, holynesse & forsakyng of þe world, & helles here signes ben false & þei ben lesyng-mongeris & lesyng in it-self. but now þei ben riche & proude & coueitouse & ful of enuye & glotonye, & ben þe fendis children for þei louen þus lesyngis, as seynt ambrose seiþ, & þus þei disceyuen þe peple bi ypocrisie.

Monks and canons should live as the first Christians,

who sold their possessions and shared the price with all Christians.

But these hold property,

and falsify the pretence made in their clothing.

Capitulum 13<sup>m</sup>.

Possessioners holden þat religion þat crist made lesse perfit þan is religious founden of a synful man, for þei holden a reule maade not of seyntis but of here owene worldly hedis more perfit þan religion of presthod þat crist<sup>4</sup> made in his fredom; for þei holden here owene tradicions more perfit þan reulis þat crist made in þe gospel. for ȝif reulis of presthod maad in þe gospel were more perfit þan þe reules of newe monkis, it were laweful for a prest to leue here reules & gon to reulis of presthod as crist made hym in þe gospel, for it is laweful to passe fro þe lasse perfit to þe more perfit, but monkis wolen not suffre for no reson, but þei

Possessioners hold the religion made by Christ less perfect than that made by sinful men;

for they will not let a monk become a simple priest;

<sup>1</sup> senden X. <sup>2</sup> omitted X. <sup>3</sup> treith (P), may be creith X. <sup>4</sup> omitted X.

yet they will let w[olen] suffre a monk goo to beggeris ordre whanne he axiþ him become a leue, þou; hee gete it neuere; & þus þei holden þe ordre of begging friar. a leue, þou; hee gete it neuere; & þus þei holden þe ordre of beggeris maad of synful men more þerfit þan religion of presthod maad of ihū crist god & man.

### Capitulum 14<sup>m</sup>.

They care more for worldly wealth and praise, than for virtue and God's praise.

Also þes possessioners dreden more lesynge of here temporaltees þan loos of goodis of vertue & of charite, & chargen more name & preisyng of men þan preisyng and þank of god; for þei dreden more to displese lordis & myȝtly men, bi seyng & meynntenynge of a profitable treuþe, for loos of here temporaltees þan to displese god bi suffryng of opyn synne & dompnesse, for whiche þei ben \*dampnable, as seynt poul seiþ; & þei chargen more kepyng of here veyn sygnys & customes, for to haue preisyng of men þat þei holden wele here religion, þan kepyng of goddis hestis & poyntis of charite & discret penaunce for preisyng & þank of god; & here is<sup>1</sup> foule ypocrisie & cursed blasphemie & forsakyng of god as seynt poul witnesseth plenerly in holy writt.

\*[p. 114 MS.]  
Romans i. 32.

### Capitulum 15<sup>m</sup>.

Possessioners bind themselves to impossibilities,

to be dead to the world, and to do any worldly business to which their abbot calls them.

þes possessioners bynden hem self to contradiccion & þing þat is imposible; for þei bynden hem self to be dede to þe world & forsaken it & bysynesse, & on þe toþer side þei bynden hem to obedience for to take worldli bisynesse aftir biddynge<sup>2</sup> of a worldly & synful & coueitous & vnkunynge abbot or priour, & þis þei moten do bi vertue of þis obedience, þou; god stire hem to be betre occupied aboute studiynge & techynge of holy writt, & þus mannis comaundement is performyd bi blyndnesse & ypocrisie & goddis comaundement & more profit of cristene soules is putte bihynde. But it semeþ þei forsaken hunger & þurst<sup>3</sup> & penaunce & trauelle to be lordis & riche & lyue in bodyli ayse on alle sidis; & þus þe fend bi his worldly clerkis disceyueþ men by colour

<sup>1</sup> his X.

<sup>2</sup> byndynge X.

<sup>3</sup> þrest X.



of holynesse, & bryngeþ hem to worldly lyuynge whanne þei wenen to come out þer-of, & þus casteþ hem bi here owene turn,

### Capitulum 16<sup>m</sup>.

þit religious possessioners ben groundid & holden forþ bi blasphemye & heresie; for þei ben groundid on þis, þat They are blasphemers and heretics, statutis maad of a synful fool ben betere in here dom þan þe lawis þat crist ordeynede for prestis & clerkis, for ellis þei wittingly forsoken<sup>1</sup> þe betre & token<sup>2</sup> þe worse & for they maintain the worse against the better, and are out of charity, and so heretics, helden<sup>3</sup> it forth, & weren out of charite. And þif þei meyn-tenen an *errour* aȝenst charite þei ben heretikis; & þif þei seyn þat here reulis ben betere þan cristis reulis þouen to prestis & clerkis, þei blasphemem aȝenst god, & so at þe and in setting their rule above Christ's they blaspheme. begynnynge þei ben blasphemys on alle sides or at þe leste knowen not cristene bileue; & in holdynge forþ comynly þei ben blasphemys, for þei letten a prest to lyue & teche as crist comaundid in þe gospel, & þei letten a cristene man to serue his god in þe beste manere. For þif a prest of her feyned ordre wole lyue poreli & iustly & goo freli aboute & teche frely goddis lawes, þei holden him apostata & prisonen hym, & holden hym cursed for þis prestis lif If a monk will live poorly and preach, they imprison him. comaundid, ensaumplid of crist & his apostlis; & so þif a cristene man wole forsake a wickid worldly couent ful of pride, ypocrisie, coueitise & symonye, after snybbynge as crist techeþ in þe gospel, þei pursuen him<sup>4</sup> as apostata & cursed man, for he doþ as crist & his apostelis techen; & þis is cursed blasphemye of god. & ne were þis prison & sclaudrynge fewe goode men or none schulden dwelle amonge suche couentis for drede of consentynge to<sup>5</sup> here synnes. And a Christian cannot leave a wicked convent, otherwise few good men would remain there.

### Capitulum 17<sup>m</sup>.

\*Also þes possessioners wasten bi ypocrisie nedeles many \*[p. 115 MS.] pore mennys goodis, for seculer possessioneris han many precious cloþis & costy & riche peluris; & alle þis is wast Their rich clothing

<sup>1</sup> forsaken X. <sup>2</sup> taken X. <sup>3</sup> holden X. <sup>4</sup> hem X. <sup>5</sup> consentynge of X.

bought out of  
poor men's  
goods.

Their clothes are  
so loose that four  
or five men might  
be clad from one  
monk's hood,  
and the great  
frock catches the  
wind and stops  
their work.

of pore mennys goodis, siþ bi here owen lawe what euere clerkis han is pore mennys, & þei schulde teche to cristene men boþe in word<sup>1</sup> & ensauple of here owene dedis þe pouert & symplenesse of crist & his apostlis. Also religious possessioneris wasten pore mennys goodis in wide cloþis & precious, þat foure or fyue nedy men myȝtten welle be cloþed wiþ o cope &<sup>2</sup> hood of a monke, & þat large cloþ serueþ to gidre wynd & lette him to go & do his dedis; & ȝit þei ben brouȝt in-to chirche to reise vp cristis pouert & his apostlis & lyuen in mornynge and penaunce and to be deed to þe world;<sup>3</sup> but by ypocrisie al þis is turned vpsodoun, what in wast meyne and proude and hiȝe houses and glotonie and ydulnesse. And so in ensauple and dede þey techen heresie and blynden<sup>4</sup> þe people in feith and lyf of crist and his apostles to þe contrarie as cursed disciples of antecrist.

### Capitulum 18.

They get hold of  
many books in  
various ways,

and let them rot  
in their libraries,  
neither using nor  
letting others  
use them.

Friars the chief  
offenders.

Defensio Cura-  
torum. Brown's  
Fasciculus, ii. 474.

ȝyt þes possessioners ben þeues and so striers of clergie and of good lif in the people, for þei han manie bokes, and namely of holy writt, Summe by bygging and some by ȝifte and testamentis and some bi<sup>5</sup> oþere disceitis and sutiltees, and hyden hem from seculer clerkis & suffren þes noble bokes waxe roten in here libraries, & neiþer wolen sillen<sup>6</sup> hem ne lenen hem to oþere clerkis þat wolden profiten bi studynge in hem & techen cristene peple þe weie to heuene. & in þis defeaute ben religious mendynauntis as principal þeuys & forgoeris of anticrist, þat seculeris & curatis may almost gete no bok of value, and herby, as seynt Richard primat of irland witnesseth, þei casten to distroie clergie<sup>7</sup> of seculeris and trewe techynge of þe peple. lord. siþ þes bokis ben more nedeful to mannys good lif þan gold or siluer, & he<sup>8</sup> is out of charite þat seeth his broþer haue nede of worldly sustenance & helpiþ him not whanne he may esely; hou moche more ben þes religious out of charite, þat helpen not

<sup>1</sup> world X.

<sup>2</sup> omitted X.

<sup>3</sup> worldly AA.

<sup>4</sup> bynden X.

<sup>5</sup> omitted X.

<sup>6</sup> omitted X.

<sup>7</sup> clergie AA.

<sup>8</sup> omitted X.

seculer clerkis & curatis of þes bokis neiþer be ȝifte ne leuyng  
ne sillyng for no<sup>1</sup> money.

### Capitulum 19<sup>m</sup>.

Clerkis possessioners ben foule out of charite & blynden  
foule þe peple; for þou; þei han many grete houses, costlewe  
& wasty, & alle þat þei han ouer here strecte<sup>2</sup> lifode is pore They have great  
costly houses,  
mennys, as here owen seyntis & lawis seyn, ȝit pore men may  
not be herbwerid amongis hem in here grete castalis or and show no hos-  
pitality to poor  
men, but only to  
lords and ladies.  
paleis, but lordis, & ladies namely, schullen soiuren<sup>3</sup> amongis  
hem many ȝeris. lord, hou schulde þes traitours ben excused  
at domesday, siþ crist seiþ þo men þat not herberwid suche  
pore herberweles schullen be dampnyd. where ypocrisie &  
worldli pride & \*coueitise & lecherie schullen make him \*[p. 116 MS.]  
exempt fro dedis of mercy & comaundement of god; for a  
bayli, stiward & riche men of lawe schullen haue festis &  
robis & mynstralis, riche cloþis & huge ȝiftis, but pore men  
schullen stonde with oute & goo dailes but ȝif þei geten  
knockis & reprouynge & wrong extorsions & euyll paynge of A balliff or stew-  
ard of a rich man  
shall have feast-  
ing and presents,  
here hire; & ȝit þes mendynauntis passen alle oþere posses- while poor men  
shall go 'dailes.'  
or get knocks and  
extortion.  
sioners in þis ypocrisie & defaute of pite for to gete worldly  
þank & grete wynnynges. Friars the worst  
of all.

### Capitulum 20<sup>m</sup>.

þes possessioners ben foule ypocritis vnder name of religion &  
cursed of crist for here disceitis bi whiche þei disceynen cristene  
peple; for whanne seynt iame techiþ þat þis is elene religion James i. 27.  
anemtis god, to visite fadirles children & moderles & wedewis  
in here tribulacion, & to kepe hym<sup>4</sup> self vnblekkid or defoulid  
fro þis world; þei visiten riche men, & namely wydewis, for  
to haue here goodis to caymes castel, & sikeren hem of so Instead of visiting  
widows in tribu-  
lation, they visit  
rich ones to get  
their goods,  
many massis & preieris duryng þe world; & ȝit þei witte not  
where here preiere turne to here owene<sup>5</sup> dampnacion, & be  
curned of god, & stire god of holynesse & treuþe to vengauce under pretence of  
prayers for them.

<sup>1</sup> omitted X.<sup>2</sup> streyte AA.<sup>3</sup> soiornen AA.<sup>4</sup> hem AA.<sup>5</sup> men X.

for here owene wickid lif & ypocrisie. *þerfore crist curseþ*  
*Matt. xxiii. 14.* scribis & pharisees, ypocritis, þat eten<sup>1</sup> widewis houses bi  
 suche longe preieris. & þei visiten not fadirles children &  
*They do not give* moderles and widewis to releue hem bi almes þeuyng, but  
*alms to widows* enqueren sicke children & widewis þif þei may disceyue hem  
*and orphans,* in purchasyng of here rentis & *þere* goodis bi flaterynge  
*but cheat them of* wordis & sikernesse of gostly helpe; & in þis ypocrisie þes  
*their property.* mendynauntis beren þe baner for svtelte & feyned pouert.  
*Friars the worst.*

### Capitulum 21<sup>m</sup>.

*They mislead* þit þes possessioners blynden lordis & mytty men to  
*lords by making* *turmenten* goddis seruauantis, bi prisonyng & *þere* bodily  
*them persecute* peyne, whanne þei forsaken proude & coueitouse men endurid  
*God's servants,* in here synnes & seruen god in þe beste manere after here  
 power & kunnyng bi fredom of þe gospel; & þus þei  
 disceyuen lordis in feiþ, hope & charite, & maken lordis þe  
 deuylis<sup>2</sup> *turmentours* wanne þei hopen to plesse god in meyn-  
 tenyng of holy religion.

### Capitulum 22<sup>m</sup>.

Also þes possessioners, wiþ helpe of false freris, sotil  
 ypocritis, & cursed heretikis, dampnen holy writt, þe kyngis  
 regalie & wise men of oure lond, for to meyntene here false  
*They say that* geten possessions & worldly lif; for þei crien þat it is heresie  
*secular lords may* or errour aȝenst goddis lawe þat secular lordis may take  
*not take goods* *temporal* goodis fro clerkis trespassyng bi longe custome; &  
*from them for* certis þif secular lordis may not take *temporal* goodis fro  
*their faults.* clerkis, þanne þou; clerkis trespasssen neuere so moche, þe  
 in traiterie, conspiryng þe kyngis deþ & quenys & alle þe  
*Then if they* lordis & ladies & comunes of oure lond, þe kyng may not  
*conspire against* ponysche hem bi o ferþing worþ, & þanne is goddis lawe  
*the king,* fals þat þeueþ power to kyngis & secular \*lordes to ponysche  
 generally, outakiþ no man; & many mo orible conclusiouns  
 suen of þis dampnyng, as men han writen in many placis.

<sup>1</sup> heten X.<sup>2</sup> deuel X.

Capitulum 23<sup>m</sup>.

Possessioners also constreynen *præstis* to leue studyng of holy writt & deuocion & *præhyng*e, & neden hem bi vertue of obedience & peyne of prisonyng, & dampnacion as þei feynen, to bisien hem nedles nyȝt & day wiȝ worldly occupation, aȝenst cristis reule & here owene profession, for ellis þei seyn here conent schulde *pærische* & here religion goo doun; & þus bi obedience maad to synful man, & in cas to fendis, þei fordon obedience to god lord of al þingis. & if a synful ydiot bidde hem do þe lesse goode, & god biddeþ hem do þe more goode, þei schullen leue þe more good & steryng of crist & þe holy gost for þis feyned obedience to a synful caitif; & þus whanne þei<sup>1</sup> bynden hem to forsake þe world & be dede *þer-to*, þei ben quekenyd bi *anticristis* obedience & maade more worldly þan ony *opere* men.

They force priests to leave study of holy things,

and to busy themselves with worldly affairs,

and set man's commands above God's.

Capitulum 24<sup>m</sup>.

Also þes possessioners ben neuere ful of worldly goodis & seculer lordischipis, but euere purchasen, be it riȝt be it wrong, bi gold, be ypocrisie<sup>2</sup> of preiere<sup>2</sup> & bi pardons; for þe coueitouse man schal not be fulfillid wiȝ money, as god seiȝ; & so þei breken þe reule of crist tauȝt & comaundid bi seint poul to alle *præstis*: we hawynge lifode & coueryng be we apeied wiȝ þes þinges; & þus is ieromyes prophecie fulfillid þat fro þe leste to þe moste þei studien to coueitise. & siȝ þei may not gouerne wel þe peple as lordis schulden, þei wolle not cesse til alle be conquerid in-to here dede hondis to distroie lordis & comunes & holy lif of *præstis*; & certis *oper* þei ben of more myȝt & witt to do boȝe temporal office & spiritual to-gidre þan weren crist & his apostlis, or elles þei ben foolis disceyued bi pride & coueitise of þis world; for crist & his apostlis couden not or myȝt not or wolde not do<sup>3</sup> þes offices to-gidre, but weren fully occupied wiȝ spiritual office; & þus þes possessioners sclaudren cristis lif & ben out of feiȝ, hope & charite, & harde rotid in heresie.

They are always getting goods and lordships.

Eccles. xiv. 9.

I. Tim. vi. 8.

Jer. vi. 13.

Trying to have all things in their dead hands,

they must be more able than Christ and his apostles,

who found spiritual office full occupation; thus they are rooted in heresy.

<sup>1</sup> þis AA.    <sup>2</sup> omitted X.    <sup>3</sup> to X. corrected by a later hand.

Capitulum 25<sup>m</sup>.

These forsakers  
of the world are  
ready to plead in  
court;

besides that, they  
will curse for  
goods worth a  
groat.

They should be  
willing to give up  
all their goods to  
save one soul.

St. Bernard.

\*[p. 118 MS.]

In many cases it  
is lawful to refuse  
tithes;

Yet even in such  
cases they take  
a man's goods,  
hurt his body and  
damn his soul.

These tithes  
should be poor  
men's livelihood.

þes possessioners þat bynden hem to perfit conseilis of crist  
& to forsake þe world ben moste bisy to stryue and plede for  
worldly possessions bi londis lawe, & curse also for dymes,  
þe, for foure<sup>1</sup> penyworþ good curse many þousand soules to  
helle. lord! hou ben þei in charite, for so litel good damp-  
nynge so many soulis, as moche as in hem is; siþ þei schulden  
lese alle worldly goodis, þe and here owene lif, for to saue o  
soule bi þe lawe of charite. certes þes ben religious of anti-  
cristis & sathanas þat maken so grete stryues & discencions,  
& to brynge men out of charite for to geten to hem a litel  
drit of temporal goodis. litil setten þei bi seynt bernardis  
word, þat what euere þou haldest to þe of tyþes & offryngis  
ouer symple lifode \* & streit cloþing, it is not þin; it is þeste,  
raueyne & sacrelegie. in many casis<sup>2</sup> sugetis may leffly wiþ-  
holde<sup>3</sup> tiþis by goddis lawe & mannys also; þan it is sathanas  
werk & anticristis to curse a man for he wole not paie his  
tiþes to a cursed man, aȝenst goddis lawe & mannys & aȝenst  
his conscience ryȝtfully groundid, & þerfore bereue him his  
catel, peyne his body, & dampne his soule. Siþ crist & his  
apostlis curseden neuere ne tauȝten to curse for tiþes, but þe  
contrarie, as þe gospel techeth; & siþ þes teþes ben geten to  
hem bi fals suggestion & meny tymes by symonye, & ȝit ben  
superflue to hem, alle þes tiþes ben pore menus lifode, & þei  
ben manquelleris in defraudyng it & manyfold cursed &  
groundid in gret heresie.

Capitulum 26<sup>m</sup>.

Also þes possessioners ben counseillours to many þousand  
mennus deþ for to meyntene here possessions & worldly lif;  
for þei conseilien lordis to werre vpon cristene men for to kepe  
here lordischipis & worldly lif in reste; & siþ fyttere &  
conseilere þer-to ben manleeris bi goddis lawe & mannys,  
alle þes possessioners ben manquelleris & irreguler, & as

They incite to  
war,

and so are mur-  
derers.

<sup>1</sup> omitted X.

<sup>2</sup> casis X.

<sup>3</sup> stonde X.

ysaye seiþ, for here hondis ben ful of blode god schal not Isaiah I. 16.  
 here hem in preieris; but as god seiþ be þe prophete malechie Malachi II. 2.  
 god schal curse to here blysyngis; & whanne sicke men gon  
 wiþ ora pro nobis in procession<sup>1</sup> þei blasphememen god & stiren  
 him to vengauce, as austyn & gregori techen pleylny.

### Capitulum 27<sup>m</sup>.

þes possessioners ben specyaly cristis enemys & anticristis, They despise the meek  
 for þei dispisen & sclaudren & pursuen meke men & pore,  
 & enhaunsen & preisen & fauoren proude men<sup>2</sup> & disolute;  
 for if þer be ony among hem þat drawe hem<sup>3</sup> to pouert  
 & deuocion & reproue here pride & ypocrisie, he schal  
 be clepid ypoorite, distroier of holy chirche, & sumtyme  
 prisoned, þat it were betre to him dwellen among heþene  
 þan in suche congregacions; & he þat is glorious to þe world  
 & sotil to gete worldly muk or drit of worldly frendschipe,  
 þou; he leue his deuocion & goddis seruyce, he is a noble  
 man & wole meyntene holy chirche; & þus þei ben cursed  
 of god, for þei seyn þat good is euyl & euyl good. and support the proud.

### Capitulum 28<sup>m</sup>.

þit þes possessioners disceyuen men by ypocrisie & waster  
 moche good in veyn; for þei feynen hem to rise at mydnyȝt, They pretend to rise at midnight,  
 & spenden liȝt & oþere costis maken, & bi day slepen moche  
 more þer-fore, þat alle þingis accountid þei han moche more  
 tyme to slepe þan ony oþere commen men. & þus þei faren  
 as þeues, slepyng on þe day & wagyng in þe<sup>4</sup> nyȝt to robbe  
 men of here catel by ypocrisie of þis wakyng & preinyng,  
 & herbi þei turnen þe nyȝt in-to day & day in-to nyȝt &  
 maken moche wast. so they waste candles and take more sleep by day than they lose by night.

### Capitulum 29<sup>m</sup>.

Also þes possessioners maken goddis houses a deen of  
 þeues; \*for þey maken here churches placis of marchaundise  
 for wynnyng and bryngenge in ȝonge children in-to here  
 using it to in-veigle young

<sup>1</sup> profession X.    <sup>2</sup> omitted X.    <sup>3</sup> omitted AA.    <sup>4</sup> omitted AA.

children into  
their order.

religion, bi giftis & certeyn of welfare & eise of bodi, & norischen hem in glotonye & coueitise; & geten priuylegies of kyngis to meyntene eche þef in here place wiþ-outen restitucion, & stryuen & pleden to meyntenen þis wrong priuylegie more þan þe best reule of here ordren or ony poynt of charite.

### Capitulum 30<sup>m</sup>.

Their deceits as  
to special prayers.

ȝit þes possessioners disceyuen lordis bi feynynge<sup>1</sup> of special preieris; for þei maken lordis to bileue þat here special preiere, as *famulorum* & *benefactorum*, schal turne to lordis aftir grauntynge & lymtynge of synful foolis, & more principaly to hem for here worldly goodis ȝeuyng þan to oþere men þat ben in more charite; & þus þe riȝtful delynge of god for þe goode lif of men is forȝeten, & delynge of synful foolis þat knowen not þe ablenesse of men & riȝtful dom of god is holden forþ; & herby myȝtty men ben brouȝt out of bileue to triste more in special preynge & applynge of synful men þan in þe riȝtful partynge of god & riȝtwisnesse of here owene lif, & bi trist of suche special preieris lordis vnderstonden þat þei schulden be excused þouȝ þei don euyl in here owen lif. lorde! siȝ none of alle þes religious whot where his preiere turne to his owene dampnacion, hou doren þei chaffaren þus wiþ worldly possessions & rentis for here preieris; siȝ þei owen to wyten þat here preieris ben

Men are led to  
believe more in  
special prayer  
than in God's  
justice and in  
good life.

They ought to  
know that their  
prayers are a-  
bominable to God  
for their many  
sins.

cursed & abhominable to god, for þei breken cristis hestis in holdynge þus seculer lordischipis, & lyuen in pride, coueitise, ypocrisie, glotonye & ydelnesse, þat drawen hem to synne of sodom & maken hem worschipis<sup>2</sup> of false goddis.

### Capitulum 31<sup>m</sup>.

They persecute  
Christ,

Clerkis possessioners pursuen crist to deþ & bitraien him for stynkyng drit; for þei sclaudren, cursen & pursuen falsly to deþ trewe techers of cristis lif & goddis hestis þat

for they persecute  
true teachers,

<sup>1</sup> feynynge X.

<sup>2</sup> worschipis X.



wolden saue mennys soulis bi trewe & free prechyng of þe gospel wiþ-uten glosyng & beggyng; & þei suffren, helpen & meyntenen false prechouris, gloseris, to robbe þe peple bi fals beggyng, bi symonye & ypocrisie & blasphemye putt vpon crist; so þat<sup>1</sup> possessioners may holden forþe here seculer lordischipis & worldli lif aȝenst goddis lawe, in distroyng & blasphemyinge of cristis lif and cristene feiþ, in distroyng of seculer lordis. & oþere prestis & curatis & of comunnes also, as it is seid bifore; & as crist seiþ þis false sclaudryng & pursuyng of cristis disciplis for þis ende is pursuyng of crist & of þe holy trinyte.

and maintain  
false beggars.

### Capitulum 32<sup>m</sup>.

ȝit þes possessioners blasphemmen aȝenst þe holy gost; for þei wolen not suffre men to fulfille his wille ne his ȝiftis & saue mennys soulis bi trewe techyng of goddis hestis & poyntis of charite, \*but constreynen men bi gret violence & turment to leue goddis stiryng<sup>2</sup> & goddis lawe & wille vndon. For þei feynen þat men schulden not teche goddis lawe wiþ-uten here leue. And þei wolen ȝeue no leue whanne men wolen vtterly teche þe pouert & mekenesse & bisy traueile of crist & his apostlis & prechyng þe gospel, & dampnen here coueitise & pride & worldly lif & ydelnesse & ypocrisie; & þus as moche as is in hem þei distroien þe holy gost & þe holy trinyte; & \*specialy bi<sup>3</sup> þis ypocrisie þat no man schul preche wiþ-uten here leue. for siþ þei ben ennemyes of crist & his lawe, as it is schewid bi here opyn euyl lif, & in caas deuelis of helle, þei casten þat no man schal teche trewely cristis lawe wiþ-uten leue of cristis traitour & of deuelis in helle; & so prestis ben constreyned bi bodily peynes & deþ to leue goddis wille & precept for contrarie comaundement of goddis traitour, & in caas a deuyl in flech, as ihū crist seiþ of iudas scariot.

They blaspheme  
against the Holy  
Ghost  
by forbidding  
men to preach  
without their  
leave,  
\*[p. 120 MS.]

which they will  
not give to one  
who will preach  
truly Christ's  
poverty.

John vi. 70.

<sup>1</sup> X inserts þe.

<sup>2</sup> suryng X.

<sup>3</sup> special al AA.

Capitulum 33<sup>m</sup>.

They blaspheme  
against the  
Father,  
in that they pre-  
vent lords from  
maintaining  
God's ordinance  
as to the clergy,

and so magnify  
themselves above  
God.

þes proude possessioners blasphemem aȝenst þe myȝt of þe  
fadir; for bi here worldly power & sotilte & malice þei  
letten lordis power, þat þei may not meyntene goddis ordy-  
nauce in þe clergie & saue here owene soulis & gouerne  
wel here<sup>1</sup> tenauntis & comunnes; & bi þe same cautel þei  
letten prestis to teche treuely & freely goddis lawe & his  
ordynaunce bi power grauntid of god, last here pride &  
worldly worschipe be brouȝt down, & mekenesse & holynesse  
ensaumplid of crist and his apostlis knowen & kept, &  
ypocrisie & oþere synnes aspied<sup>2</sup> & distroied; & so as  
anticrist þei magnifyen hem self & here power more þan  
god & his power.

Capitulum 34<sup>m</sup>.

They profess  
abstinence,  
but turn to giut-  
tony;

poverty,  
but turn to  
oouertousness;  
labour,

but turn to sale  
of prayers and  
idleness.

ȝit þes possessioners turnen abstinence & penaunce in-to  
glotony, & traueile in-to ydelnesse, & pouert in-to coueitise;  
for þei ben groundid in abstynence after crist & his apostlis,  
& namely þes newe religious, & þei turnen hem in-to glotony  
& delicat lifode more comynly þan oþere men; & þei ben  
groundid on pouert after crist & his apostlis, but þei ben  
turned in-to worldly coueitise bi<sup>3</sup> many sotiltes & ypocrisie;  
& þei ben groundid on labor of here hondis bi here owene  
reule, & ȝit þei turnen þat labor in-to preieris bi mouþ<sup>4</sup> &  
ben idel & veyn; & þus bi colour of holynesse þei stiȝen  
in-to synnes on eche side.

Capitulum 35<sup>m</sup>.

Proude possessioners ben perilous þeues & cursed heretikis;  
for þei affermen who ener takiþ ony temporal goodis fro holy  
chirche, þat is þe comynthe<sup>5</sup> of clerkis after here dom, he is a  
þeef<sup>6</sup> & cursed in dede; þanne siþ þei taken away þe noble  
gostly good of wilful pouert & symplenesse & mekenesse, in

They say that he  
who takes tem-  
poral goods from  
the Church is a  
thief;  
they rob the  
Church of  
spiritual goods,

<sup>1</sup> omitted AA. <sup>2</sup> aspied X. <sup>3</sup> and AA. <sup>4</sup> monye X. <sup>5</sup> comutierte X. <sup>6</sup> þeef X.

whiche *vertues* crist groundid holy chirche, þei ben stronge þenes & *anticristis* disciplis. & siþ þei meyntenen so harde and are strong thieves. þis wickid þeaftē, & robben holy chirche fro þis noble tresor of pouert & mekenesse, and defoulen it wiþ drit of worldly lordschipe aȝenst þe \*wille of ihū crist here spouse, þei ben [p. 121 MS.] cursed heretikis & here meyntenours also, & þus þei ben *anticristis* peruertynge cristendom.

### Capitulum 36<sup>m</sup>.

ȝit þes possessioners bryngen lordis out of bileue, & maken They deceive lords as to the meaning of oaths. hem bi blynde swerynge meyntene þe coueitise & worldly lif of *anticristis* clerkis, whanne bi *vertue* of here oþ þei schulden distroie þe false coueitise & pride of worldly clerkis: for þes lordis sweren to meyntenen þe<sup>1</sup> priuylegyes & freedomis & riȝttis of holy chirche; & bi þis oþ þei moten nedis meyntenen þe *perfit* freedom of holy lif, of mekenesse & pouert & oþere goode *vertues* þat crist ordeyned to þe chirche; but Lords swear to maintain the rights of the Church. Antichrist's clergy say this means their false possessions *anticristis* clerkis chalengen<sup>2</sup> bi þis oþ þat lordis owen to meyntene here false lordischipis, pride & coueitise, & wrong customes of *prescripcion* aȝenst goddis lawe<sup>3</sup> & good conscience; for ȝif þes *anticristis* clerkis han holden wrongfully a cristene mannys good lond oþer rentis<sup>4</sup> or oþer goodis bi þritti ȝeer or fourty with-outen ony axynge, þei seyn þis synful possession so longe contynued makij hem worldly lordis of þis good; & þus þei maken lordis to meyntene fraudis & falsnesse aȝenst goddis hestis, whanne lordis wenen to meyntene riȝtful lawes for worschipe of god; but as when they claim land by prescription, though wrongfully obtained. *certis* here is moche þeſte, moche treson & moche harm of soulis on eche side meyntened bi þis blynde swerynge.

### Capitulum 37<sup>m</sup>.

Also þes possessioners dampnen trewe men techynge frely & trewely þe gospel & goddis hestis for heretikis, for to coloure here owen worldly<sup>5</sup> lif, but þei hem self ben foule They condemn true preachers of the gospel as heretics.

<sup>1</sup> per X.    <sup>2</sup> chalagen X.    <sup>3</sup> omitted X.    <sup>4</sup> trentis AA.    <sup>5</sup> omitted X.

while they are  
heretikes,

but will not bear  
to be reproved;

as Scribes and  
Pharisees im-  
puted sin to  
Christ and his  
disciples.

heretikis for here cursed pride, coueitise & enuye þat þei dwellen inne & meynntenen strongly; but of þis verrey heresie & most perilous wolen þei not þenke ne speke, ne suffre oþere trewe men to speke aȝenst it for to saue here soulis & helpe oþere men out of synne. & þus þei faren wiþ cristene men & holy writt as diden scribis & phariseis wiþ crist & his apostlis & his gospel, & whanne þes pharisees, scribis & hiȝe preſtis weren ful of heresie & blaſphemye þei putten alle þes synnes on crist & his apostlis to blynde þe comune peple, & so þes possessioners don now bi more ypocrisie & more sotilte & more cruelte.

### Capitulum 38<sup>m</sup>.

\*They slander  
true preachers  
as cause of  
strife,

but they are the  
real causes of dis-  
sension,

by spending the  
property of the  
poor in litigation

\*[p. 122 MS.]

and by persecu-  
tion of true men.

þes proude possessioners disclaundren trewe prechours of þe gospel & cristis lif for makeris of discencion & debate among neiȝeboris in þe lond; whanne þei hem self wiþ here cursed lif & confederacie wiþ tirauntis for here gold ben cause of discencion & enemyte. for wiþ pore mennus lifode þei hiren myȝtty men to stryue & plede aȝenst goddis techynge, & helpe & releuyng & encreſsynge of ſeculer lordis, & helpe & releuyng of pore comunes; & þus as cursed pharisees & scribis & hiȝe preſtis þei putten here owen cursed synnes vpon trewe men to lette goddis lawe to be knowen, & hiden & colouren & <sup>1</sup> \*meyntenen here olde synnes and traitere bi strong pursuyng to deþ of alle trewe men as moche as þei may, & herbi þei ben manquelleris & pursueris of crist & endurid in <sup>2</sup> old heresie.

### Capitulum 39<sup>m</sup>.

They expect to  
be regarded as  
holy while they  
lead a worldly  
life,  
and will not be  
reproved.

Also þes possessioners magnifyen hem self more þan ihū crist, & ſeken more here owene name & honour þan honour of god & helpe of cristene soulis; for þei axen & coueiten name of holynesse & reuerence wiþ þis proude worldly lif, & þat ſchal no man reprove hem of here opyn ypocrisie, symonye & coueytise: & ihū crist myȝtte not kepe holynesse

<sup>1</sup> omitted AA.

<sup>2</sup> X inserts "he."

wiþ suche worldly lif & axe such worldly reuerence as þes possessioners don. And ihū crist was redy to be reproved of his enemyes if þei myȝtten fynde ony defeaute in him. but ȝit<sup>1</sup> þes possessioners ben ful of synne, & þouȝ þei ben most bounden to pacience, mekenesse & charite ȝit þei ben wode whanne men wolen amende here cursed lif bi techynge of þe gospel; & if men dispisen hem or don not worldly reuerence to hem þei ben wode wroþ & wolen be vengid vp al here myȝt; but þouȝ men dispisen god in here presence bi cursed swerynge or oþere synnes þei chargen not, & ȝit þouȝ here owene seruauntis do so, þat is worse to hem, þei chargen it<sup>2</sup> not. but as þe iewis diden crist to deþ for drede of lesyng of here lordschipe & worldly name & honour, so þes possessioners don here power to do alle trewe men to deþ þat techen cristis gospel & mekenesse & pouert aȝenst here false newe lawis & pride & coueitise, & hou þei enuonymyn cristendom bi word & dede.

Christ was willing to be reproved.

They are angry if respect is not paid to them, but they do not mind men, even their servants, swearing in their presence.

The Jews put Christ to death from fear of losing honour and lordship,

so these possessioners would do with true men now.

### Capitulum 40<sup>m</sup>.

ȝit þes ypocritis possessioners ben traitouris to god, to lordis, & to comunnes also; for þei han almost þe tresor of þe lond & worldly lordschipe, aȝenst goddis lawe; & whanne þe kyng haþ nede of a taxe, þei wolen not paie for pore men, not wiþstondynge þat þei ben procuratouris of pore men, & al þat þei han<sup>3</sup> ouer here owen symple liflode is pore mennus good, as goddis lawe & mannus techen opynly, but for to plede & meyntene wrongis & putten men out of here lond & meyntenen false prauelleges aȝenst charite & good conscience þei han þousand markis & poundis; & here þei chalengen aboue crist & alle his apostlis þat þouȝ þei han almost alle<sup>4</sup> lordschipis amortised to hem, ȝit þei wolen not paien tribute ne taxe<sup>5</sup> to þe kyng for meyntenaunce of þe rewme & sauynge of pore mennus lif; & ȝit crist paieð for him & his disciplis tribute to þe emperoure, þouȝ he hadde

They get all the treasure of the land into their hands, and will not pay taxes;

but in lawsuits they will spend a thousand pounds.

They will not pay tribute;

yet Christ paid tribute to the Emperor.

<sup>1</sup> omitted AA.

<sup>2</sup> omitted X.

<sup>3</sup> omitted X.

<sup>4</sup> alle is added in X. by a later hand.

<sup>5</sup> axe AA.

They challenge  
this exemption  
by Antichrist's  
power.

\*[p. 123 MS.]

non such temporaltees. & þis exempcion þei chaltenge bi  
antichristis power & not bi god almyȝtty, for he constreyneþ  
clerkis to be suget to seculer lordis & to lyue a iust lif &  
symple & pore wiþ-oute worldly lordschipe \* & opyn beggyng  
in a<sup>1</sup> vertuous mene. god almyȝtty stireþ prætis, lordis &  
comunes to knowe ypocrisie, heresie & treson of antichristis  
worldly clerkis, & knowen & meynntenen þe riȝtful ordynaunce  
of god & þe perfit fredom of þe gospel. Amen.

<sup>1</sup> omitted AA.

## VII.

HOW THE OFFICE OF CURATES IS ORDAINED  
OF GOD.

I HAVE already said (in the Preface to No. IV.) that I think this tract to be by another hand than Wyclif's, but the tone of thought is very like his. The date of it is evidently after 1383, as Bishop Spenser's crusade in Flanders is mentioned as a thing of the past (Chapter xvi.).

When we read the complaint (Chap. xxii.) of the clergy who leave their parishes and go to school (that is, of course, to the University), in order to lead a loose life there, we are not suppose that the writer had any dislike to the Universities. Oxford was a chief centre of Wyclifite influence, and Wyclif himself, in 1368, received from his bishop two years' leave of absence from his living (Fillingham) to study at Oxford, where, our tract tells us, "good priests traveilen faste to lerne goddis lawe." Its author had rubbed shoulders with the men who went to study "Civil and Canon," and did little good thereat, or at most learned to "crack a little Latin in Consistories." The scholar is as indignant against fast men who degrade the seat of learning, as the reformer against priests who neglect their parishes. We may suppose the writer to be one of Wyclif's Oxford friends—perhaps Herford or Purvey.

Copied from the Corpus MS. X. and collated with the Dublin MS. AA.

## SUMMARY.

- CHAP. I. Curates care too much for worldly goods.
- II. Men run about after benefices and buy them. The money thus spent would be better employed in reducing taxation.
- III. Wayward curates are Satans transformed into angels of light—angels not of God but of the devil.
- IV. Curates study law books instead of the Bible.
- V. They go to law for trifles of tithe, bringing heavy charges on their subjects, or cursing and imprisoning them.
- VI. They set their parishioners an example of worldliness.

- CHAP. VII. They teach men to war ; they despise the poor and flatter the rich.
- VIII. They will not teach Holy Writ nor let others teach it.
- IX. They waste the money of the poor in pomp and luxury.
- X. They serve lords in worldly business and neglect God's work.
- XI. They weloome cheating pardoners, but hinder true preachers.
- XII. They neglect God's command to preach.
- XIII. They excommunicate for not paying tithes, but not for sin.
- XIV. They waste the money of the poor in hawking and hunting.
- XV. They haunt taverns, play games of chance, and get drunk.
- XVI. Refuse the sacrament to those who do not pay tithes, or will not contribute to wars such as Spenser's crusade.
- XVII. They take benefices without knowing the gospel, and teach the people evil.
- XVIII. They relate chronicles and stories of false miracles to mislead the people.
- XIX. They go shares with pardoners, who deceive the people.
- XX. They hate good priests and love bad ones.
- XXI. Wicked curates take refuge in lords' courts, and use the protection of lords to avoid discipline.
- XXII. They go under pretence of study to the Universities, and lead a riotous life there.
- XXIII. The more learned of them use the Civil and Canon Law to annoy the poor, and neither have nor care for knowledge of the Bible.
- XXIV. They let worldly clerks condemn God's law, and stop true preachers; while they preach the traditions of Antichrist.
- XXV. They study Civil and Canon Law and neglect God's law.
- XXVI. They forbid the people to judge their words or deeds.
- XXVII. They forbid laymen to read the Gospel in their mother-tongue.
- XXVIII. They deceive men as to absolution, leading them to trust in shrift and gifts rather than in contrition and amendment.
- XXIX. They rob people by their pitiless excommunications.
- XXX. They take tithes according to neither Testament, but according to sinful laws.
- XXXI. They get benefices by simony, and neglect them afterwards.
- XXXII. Under pretence of liberties of the Church they make the people maintain bad priests in their evil ways.
- XXXIII. They say that if these bad ways are maintained, priests' prayers will bring reward, but any attempt to reform priests is cursed. Final apostrophe to curates.



Hou þe office of curatis is ordeyned of god.

In dei nomine. Amen.

### [Capitulum 1.]

For þe office of curatis is ordeyned of god & fewe don it wele & many ful euyle, þerfore telle we summe defautis<sup>1</sup> to amende hem wiþ goddis helpe. First þei ben more bisi aboute worldly goodis þan vertues & goode keepyng of mennus soulis; for he þat can best geten riches of his world to-gidre & holde grete houshold & worldly aray, he is holden a worþi man of holy chirche, þou; he conne not þe leste<sup>2</sup> poynt of þe gospel; & such on is preised & born vp of þe bischop & here officeris at þe fulle; but þat curat þat ȝeueþ him to studie holy writt & teche his<sup>3</sup> paryschenys to saue here soulis, & lyueþ in mekenesse, penaunce & bisi trauile a bonte gostly þingis, & reckiþ not of worldly worschipe & riches, is holden a fool & distroiere of holy chirche, & is<sup>4</sup> dispised & pursued of hiȝe prestis & prelatis & here officeris, & hatid of oþere curatis in contre; & þis makþ many curatis to be negligent in here gostly cure & ȝeue hem to ocupacion & bisynesse of worldly goodis. þes negligent curatis þenken ful<sup>5</sup> litel hou dere crist bouȝte mannys soule wiþ his precious blood & deþ, & hou harde rekenyng schal he make at domes day for þes soulis. certis it semeþ þat þei ben out of cristene mennys feiþ; for þei maken hem not redy to come þedir & answee wel hou þei camen in-to here benefices & hou þei lyueden & tauȝten & spendiden pore mennus goodis; for ȝif þei hadden þis feiþ redy in here mynde þei wolden bigynne a betre lif & con-  
tynue þer-inne.

Faults of curates.

More busy about worldly things than about men's souls.

He that is rich is praised by the bishop,

but a poor meek priest is despised and persecuted.

Negligent curates are out of the faith,

or they would live better.

<sup>1</sup> defaute AA. <sup>2</sup> beste X. <sup>3</sup> is X. <sup>4</sup> omitted X. <sup>5</sup> omitted AA.

Capitulum 2<sup>m</sup>.

They will run  
after fat benefices,

but will not go a  
myle to preach  
the gospel.

Col. iii. 5.

Guilty of simony.  
Gold sent out of  
the country to  
buy benefices  
\*[p. 124 MS.]

were better spent  
to relieve the  
commons from  
taxes;

and simony  
should be for-  
bidden under  
severe penalties.

þe secunde defaute. þei rennen faste bi lond & watir in grete perilis of bodi & soule for to geten fatte benefices, but þei wolen not goo comunly a myle for to preche þe gospel, þou; cristene men rennen to helle for defaute of knowynge & keypyng of goddis lawe. & certis here þei schewen in dede þat þei ben foule blend<sup>1</sup> with coueitise, & worschipen false<sup>2</sup> goddis, as seynt poul seiþ, siþ þe[i] louen so moche worldly riches & so moche traueilen þerfore nyȝt & day in þouȝt & dede, & so litel traueilen for goddis worschipe & sauynge of cristene soulis. but who may excuse þes coueitouse clerkis fro symonye & heresie in þis poynt? neiþer goddis lawe ne mannys, ne reson, ne good conscience. & hou myche gold goþ out of oure lond for purchasyng of benefices in-to \*aliens hondis, & hou moche is þouen priuely to men in þe lond, late þe kyng & his witti conseil enquire, & þei schal fynde many þousand poundis: & late alle þat helpe þe comunis in þis grete talliage, & late alle clerkis be warnyd & charged<sup>3</sup> by þe kyng<sup>4</sup> & lordes of þe rēwme<sup>4</sup> þat þei don no more symonye for benefices, vp peyne of lesyng of here benefices & prisonynge & exilyng; siþ þis symonye makip hem chef heretikis as here owene lawe seiþ plenerly, & þat þei may not be sauȝd but iif þei forsake þe benefice geten bi symonye, and alle here fautours & consentours to þis symonye rennen in þe same dampnacion as goddis lawe & mannys witnessen.

Capitulum 3<sup>m</sup>.

Wayward curates  
are Satans trans-  
formed into  
angels of light;

do not preach  
Christ's gospel;

þe þridde defaute of weiward curatis þat þei ben angelis of helle & ben sathanas transfigurid in-to an angel of lȝt to<sup>5</sup> lede men queyntely to helle; for in-stede of trewe techynge of cristis gospel þei ben doumbe, or elles tellen lesyngis of mennys tradicions for pride & coueitise of worldly goodis; & for ensaumple of good lif þei sclaudren here parischenys

<sup>1</sup> blent AA. <sup>2</sup> falsen X. <sup>3-5</sup> omitted X. <sup>4-4</sup> omitted AA. <sup>5</sup> and AA.

many weies bi ensauple of pride, enuye, coueitise & vnre- set bad examples;  
sonable vengauce, so cruely cursynge for tipes & euyl curse for tithes.  
customes; & for ensauple of holy deuocion & deuout preiere  
& werkis of mercy þei techen in-dede ydelnesse, glotonye,  
dronkenesse & lecherie, & meynthenynge of þes synnes & many  
moo. For siþ prestis ben clepid aungelis in holy writt, & þes Malachi ii. 7.  
curatis bryngen not message of god but of þe fend, as here  
wickid lif scewiþ,<sup>1</sup> þei ben not aungelis of god but aungelis of  
þe fend; & þe trewe clerk robert grosted writiþ to þe pope Grosted.  
þat curatis ben sathanas transfigurid in-to aungel of liȝt for  
þei prechen<sup>2</sup> not cristis gospel bi word & good lif, þou; þei  
diden no more synne<sup>3</sup>; and<sup>4</sup> siþ seynt petir was clepid sathanas  
of crist, as þe gospel telliþ, for he was contrarie to goddis St. Peter called  
Satan.  
wille & sauourid not heuenly þingis, wel ben þes euele Matt. xvi. 23.  
curatis clepid sathanas, siþ þei ben more contrarie to goddis  
wille & sauouren less gostly þingis & saunye of cristene  
soulia.

### Capitulum 4<sup>m</sup>.

þe fourþe errou; þat þei chargen more statutis of synful They care more  
men þan þe moste resonable lawe of god almyȝtty; for þei for man's law  
dreden more þe popis lawe & statutis maad of bischopis & of than for God's.  
opere<sup>5</sup> officeris þan þe noble lawe of the gospel, & herefore  
þei han many grete bokis & costy of mannes lawe & studien They have law  
hem faste. But fewe curatis han þe bible & expositiouns<sup>6</sup> of books and study  
þe gospelis, <sup>7</sup> & litel studien on hem <sup>7</sup> & lesse donne after hem. them, but few  
But wolde god þat euery parische chirche in þis<sup>8</sup> lond hadde priests have the  
a good bible & good expositouris on þe gospellis, & þat þe Bible.  
prestis studiende<sup>9</sup> hem wel & tauȝten trewely þe \*gospel. & \*[p. 125 MS.]  
goddis hestis to þe peple; for þanne schulde good lif regne, &  
reste & pees & charite; & synne & falsnesse putt a bak. god  
brynge þis ende to his peple. amen.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>1</sup> schewiþ AA.<sup>2</sup> techen AA.<sup>3</sup> omitted X.<sup>4</sup> in X.<sup>5</sup> her AA.<sup>6</sup> expositours X.<sup>7-7</sup> omitted AA.<sup>8</sup> AA. inserts world.<sup>9</sup> studien AA.<sup>10</sup> omitted X.

*Capitulum 5<sup>m</sup>.*

Lawsuits for  
tithes.

Summon men  
and take their  
goods,  
or curse them,

and then put  
them in prison.

Contrary to  
Christ's example.

Luke ix. 55.  
1 Peter iii. 9.  
Rom. xii. 21.

Curates do not  
love their sub-  
jects' souls when  
they will give  
them to the devil  
for fourpence.

The people  
should insist as  
much on curates  
doing their work.

þe fyueþe defaute; þat þei haunten <sup>1</sup> strif & plee & gendren enuye & hate among lewed men for tyþes, whanne þei don not here office aȝenward; for now þei leuen *præchyng*e of þe gospel & crien faste aftir tyþes, & somonen men to chapitre & bi fors taken here goodis, & ellis cursen hem seuene fote aboue þe erþe & seuene foot wiþ-inne þe herþe & seuene fote on eche side; & afterward drawen men to prison, as þei weren kyngis & emperours of mennus bodies & catel, & forȝeten clenly þe mekenesse & þe pacience of crist & his apostlis, hou þei curseden not for tyþes whanne men wolden neiþer ȝeue hem mete ne drynk ne herbwre. But crist blamyd his apostlis whanne þei wolden axe suche vengeance, as þe gospel of seynt luk techeth, & seynt petir biðiþ blisse oþere men, ȝe here enemis, & not haue wille to curse, & poul techeth þat we schulden not do euele for euyl, But ousr come an euyl dede bi good doynge aȝen. Lord, hou louen þes curatis here sugetis soulis þat wolen for foure pens bitake hem bodi & soule to þe fend, ȝe, whanne þei may not paie for verray <sup>2</sup> pouert, & whanne þei don not here gostly office; & þanne þe curatis ben more cursed of god for wiþdrawynge of techynge in word, in <sup>3</sup> dede, in good ensaunple þanne þe sugetis wiþdrawynge tiþes & offryngis whanne þei don wel here gostly office. & wold god þat <sup>4</sup> þe peple wolde axe as faste of þe curatis gostly office, þat þei ben more holden to paie, as þe curatis axen dymes & offryngis, & þe curat loueth more his owene worldly good þan his sugetis soule <sup>5</sup> þat wole brynge his parischen out of cherite & pacience & coste ten mark or twenti for a cause of þre pens or foure.

*Capitulum 6<sup>m</sup>.*

Curates set an ex-  
ample of world-  
liness to their  
flock.

þe sixte defaute; þat þei techen here parischens bi here dedis and lif; þat is a bok to here sugetis, to loue & seke

<sup>1</sup> AA inserts is.

<sup>4</sup> omitted AA.

<sup>2</sup> omitted X.

<sup>5</sup> X inserts &.

<sup>3</sup> & X.

worldly glorie & to reckon nouȝt<sup>1</sup> of heuenely þingis;  
 for þei maken hem self bisy niȝt & day to geten worldely  
 avaunsementis & here owene worschipe & dignyte in þis  
 world and<sup>2</sup> pleden & st[r]yuen þerfore, & helden<sup>3</sup> it grete  
 riȝtwisnesse to holden forþ & meyntene a poynt of worldly  
 priuylegie & dignyte; but aboute gostly dignite & hiȝe degre  
 of heuenly blisse þei wolen not st[r]yue aȝenst gostly  
 ennemys; for þei stryuen not who schal be most meke &  
 most wilful pore & most bisi in opyn prechyng & priuey  
 counseilyng hou men schal conquere heuene, as dide crist  
 & his apostlis, but resten as mold-warpiȝ in wrotyng of  
 worldly worschipe & erþely goodis, as þouȝ þere were no lif  
 but only in þis wrecchid world; & þus where þei schulden  
 lede here parischenys to heuene bi trewe techyng & holy  
 ensauple & gret desir of heuenely þynges, þei leden hem to  
 helle ward bi cursede ensauple of pride, coueitise & euyl  
 techyng \* to sette here lykyng endeles in ioie & worschipe of  
 þis wrecchid world.

They strive for  
worldly privi-  
leges,

but not who shall  
follow Christ  
most.

They are like  
moles,

lead their parish-  
ioners hell-ward.

\*[p. 126 MS.]

### Capitulum 7<sup>m</sup>.

þe seuene error; þat þei techen synful men to bie helle  
 ful dere & not to come to heuene þat is profred hem for  
 litel cost; for þei techen cristen men to sufre moche cold,  
 hungur & þrist & moche wakyng & dispisyng & betyng for  
 to gete worldly honour & a litel drit bi fals werryng out of  
 charite; & ȝif þei bryngen hem moche gold þei assoilen hem  
 litly & maken hem siker bi here preieris & graunten hem  
 goddis blissyng, but þei techen not hou here parischenys  
 schulden dispose hem to resceyue ȝiftis of þe holy gost &  
 kepe condicions of charite, doynge trewþe & good conacionce  
 to eche man boþe pore & riche; & ȝif þei ben pore bi aduen-  
 ture of þe world or wilfully bi drede of synne, þei dispisen  
 hem & setten hem at nouȝt and seyn þei ben cursed for þei  
 han not moche muk; & ȝif þei han mochel worldly catel

They teach Chris-  
tian men to war,

instead of how to  
live in charity.

Despise the poor,

and flatter the  
rich.

<sup>1</sup> omitted X.

<sup>2</sup> in X.

<sup>3</sup> horden X.

geten wiþ false opis, false weiȝtis, & opore disceitis, þei preisen hem & b[l]issen hem & seyn god is wiþ hem <sup>1</sup> & blisseþ hem.<sup>1</sup>

### Capitulum 8<sup>m</sup>.

They shut up  
the kingdom of  
heaven against  
men.  
Matt. xxiii. 13.

They will not  
teach holy writ,  
nor let others  
teach it.

They make the  
people follow  
their statutes,  
and lead them  
to hell.

þe eiȝte defaute; þei shitten þe kyngdom of heuene bi fore men, & neiþer gon in hem self ne suffren opore men to entren; for þei shitten holy writt, as þe gospel & com-aundementis & condic[i]ounes of charite þat ben clepid þe kyngdom of heuene, bi here false newe lawis & euyl glosynges & euyl techynge; for neiþer þei wolen lerne hem self ne techen holy writt, ne suffre opore men to don it leste here owene synne & ypocrisie be knowen & here lustful lif wiþdrawen. & þus þei closen cristis lif & his apostlis fro þe comune peple bi keies of anticristis iuridiccion & censures, & maken hem not so hardy to seye a treuþe of holi writt aȝenst here cursed lif, for þat schal be holden detraccion & enuye & aȝenst charite; & þerfore þei make þe peple to sue here techynge & here statutis & customes & to leue goddis techynge, & herbi leden hem blyndly in-to helle; & þus closen þe kyngdom of heuene fro hem & leden hem to helle bi here blynde ypocrisie & coueityse, as crist seiþ hym self.<sup>2</sup>

### Capitulum 9<sup>m</sup>.

They waste poor  
men's goods in  
pompe and luxury,

without thinking  
of the labour by  
which they were  
earned.

<sup>o</sup>[p. 127 MS.]

þe ney[n]þe errour; þat þei wasten pore mennus goode in ryche pellure & costy cloþis & worldly aray, as festis of ryche men & glotony & dronkenesse & lecherie sumtymes, for þei passen grete men in here gaye pellure & precious cloþis & wast festis & tatrid squeyeres & opore meyne, þat semen raþere turmentours þan cristene men; & he þat wast<sup>3</sup> most of pore mennus lifode is holden most worþi & most noble man of holy chirche. litel þenke þei hou sore pore men traueilen & spenden here flesch \* & blood aboute þe goddis þat þei wasten so nedeles; & hou seynt

<sup>1-1</sup> omitted AA.

<sup>2</sup> omitted X.

<sup>3</sup> wasteþ AA.

bernard crieþ: what euere þing curatis holden of þe auterage Bernard.  
ouer a sympule lifode & cloþinge it nys not here but oþere  
mennus, & it is þeste & raueyne & sacrilegie; & hou euyl it  
is to suffre pore men perische for hungire & þriste & cold, &  
here curatis han fatte hors with gaye sadlis & bridelis. hou  
resonable is þis poynt þat þe procuratour of pore men schal  
haue so riche pelure & esy fare of body, boþ of mete & drynk  
& reste, & pore men whos þes goddis ben schullen haue so  
moche peyne & payn defaute.

Their fat horses  
and gay saddles.  
Poor men's proce-  
tors better off  
than their prin-  
cipals.

### Capitulum 10<sup>m</sup>.

þe tenþe defaute; þat þei haunten lordis courtis & ben  
occupied in worldly office & don not here cure to here  
parischenys, & þit þei taken mo worldly goodis þerfore þan  
crist & his apostlis. And cortis þis is gret traitere, for what  
man druste vndertake to kepe men biseged in a feble castel  
wiþ many stronge enemys, & þanne fle in-to an hogherdis  
office & lete enemys take þis castel & distroie it?<sup>1</sup> were not  
þis opyn treson, and þis kepere gilty of þe castel lesynge  
& alle men þer-inne? So it is of þes curatis & cristene  
soulis of whiche þei taken cure, þat ben bisegid wiþ<sup>2</sup> fendis,  
whanne þei leuen hem vnkept & bisien hem in worldly office  
& lordis courtis. whi ben not þes lordis þat þus holden  
curatis in here courtis & worldly offices traitours to god  
almytty, siþ þei drawen away his chef knyttis fro here  
gostly bataile whanne & where þei weren most nedful. for  
þis seruyce þat lordis han of curatis abouten worldly office  
cristene soulis ben vntauþt, & woluyes of helle stranglen hem  
& encombren hem in endles dispeir.

They hang about  
lords' courts and  
busy themselves  
with secular  
office.

This is treason  
to God.

The lords who  
employ them are  
traitors too.

### Capitulum 11<sup>m</sup>.

þe eleuenþe errour; þat þei chargen more wrongful  
maundementis of synful men þan þe most riȝtful comaunde-  
mentis of god; for þif þe pope or bischop sende a letter

Care more for  
men's commands  
than for God's.

<sup>1</sup> omitted X.

<sup>2</sup> bi AA.

They weloome a for to resceyue a pardonor to disceyue þe peple bi  
cheating pardonor with the graunt of<sup>1</sup> many þousand þeer to pardon, he schal be sped  
pope's letter, but forbid a true algatis; but ȝif<sup>2</sup> þer come ony trewe man to præche frely &  
preacher;

trewely þe gospel, he schal be lettid for wrongful comaundement of a synful man. & þus þei dreden more synful men þan god almyȝtty, siþ þei putten goddis comaundement & his riȝtful wille bihynde & putten a synful mannis wille & wrong comaundement bifore. & þus for here owene worldly profit

thus they stop  
their people from  
hearing God's  
law.

& bodely ayse þei stoppen here parischenys fro herynge of goddis lawe, þat is fode of soule, & leden hem blyndly to helle; & þes ben euele fadris þat þus cruelly enfamynen here sugetis soulis & dryuen hem to dampnacion for loue of worldly muk or bodily ayse, or for drede of wrecchid anticristis þat ben goddis traitours & his peplis.

### Capitulum 12<sup>m</sup>.

They despise  
preaching,  
\*[p. 128 MS.]

but learn men's  
traditions.

þe twelþe error; þat þei dispisen þe principal office comaundid of \*god to curatis, & bisen hem aboute nouelries maad of synful men; for comunly þei kunnen not præche þe gospel, & þei wolen lerne bisily mennus tradicions for worldly wynnyng, but not þe gospel þat crist god & man tauȝte & comaundid curatis to techen þat to lif & deþ; & certis as þei louen to studie, kepe & teche þe word<sup>3</sup> of synful men bifore the word of god, so þei louen synful men or pride or worldly drit þat comeþ of mennus lawe more þan almyȝtty god & þe blisse of heuene; & certis herfore þei ben traitours of god & cheuenteynes in þe fendis hoost to lede men into helle.

### Capitulum 13<sup>m</sup>.

They excommu-  
nicate more for  
money than for  
sin.  
A man may break  
God's law and not  
be summoned,

þe þrittene error; þei cursen here gostly children more for loue of worldly catel þan for brekyng of goddis hestis. For þou; a man breke opynly þe hestis of god, lyuynge in

<sup>1</sup> omitted X.

<sup>2</sup> omitted X.

<sup>3</sup> world X.



pride, in false swerynge,<sup>1</sup> in opyn brekyng of þe holy day, he schal not be sompned ne ponysched ne cursed bi hem. But ȝif a man be bihynde of tiþes & oþere offryngis & cust[u]mes maad of synful men, he schal be sompned, ponyschid & cursed, ȝe þou; he may not lyue out of oþere mennus dette & fynde his wif & his children bi goddis comaundement; & þus þei seken more þere<sup>2</sup> owene worschipe & wynnyng þan þe worschipe of god & sauynge of cristene soulis; & þus þei worschipe false goddis for here false coueitise. wonder it is þat þes curatis cursen so sore for here owene cause where þei schulden be pacient as crist was<sup>3</sup> and hise apostlis<sup>4</sup>; & so litel reken of dispit don to god where þei schulden taken al resonable vengeance.<sup>4</sup>

but if he is behind in his dues he will be summoned and cursed, though he cannot afford to pay.

### Capitulum 14<sup>m</sup>.

þe fourtenþe; þei taken here worldly myrþe, hankyng & huntyng & oþere vanytes doynge, & suffren woluyes of helle stranglen mennus soulis bi many cursed synnes. þei schulden drawe men fro worldly vanytes & techen hem þe perilis of þis lif & to þenke on here deþ day, & be myrroure to hem to morne for here synnes & oþere mennus & for longe taryng of heueneley blisse, & laste in holy preieris & trewe techyng of þe gospel and aspiyng þe fendis cautelis, & warne cristene men of hem. But now þe more þat a curat haþ of pore mennys goodis, þe more comunly he wastiþ in costly fedynge of houndis & hawkis, & suffre pore men haue grete defeaute of mete & drynk & cloiþ; but hou schullen þei answere to crist at þe dredful day of dom, þat þus holden pore mennus liflode fro hem & wasten it in such worldly vanyte? certis þei schullen be dampnyd for manaleeris boþe of body & soule, & for sleeris of crist wiþ þe wickid iewis þat nayleden him on þe cros.

They waste money in hawking and hunting.

They will be damned as murderers.

<sup>1</sup> weryng X.      <sup>2</sup> here AA.      <sup>3,4</sup> omitted X.

<sup>4</sup> In AA this last clause runs "and where þat þei schulden take suche unreasonable vengeance."

*Capitulum 15<sup>m</sup>.*

They haunt  
taverns,

\*[p. 129 MS.]

play at tables,  
chess and hazard;

get drunk.

He that goes  
most to taverns  
is most praised  
for liberality.

þe feftenþe; þat þei haunten tauernes out of mesure & stiren lewid men to dronkenesse, ydelnesse & *cursed* swerynge and \*chydyng & fyttyng; for þei wolen not traueilen faste in here gostly office *after* crist & his apostlis, ' þat ful bisili haþ tauȝt hem ' ; þerfore þei fallen to nyse pleies, at tables, chees & hasard, & beten þe stretis, & sitten at þe tauerne til þei han lost here witt, & þan chiden & stryuen & fytten sumtyme, & sumtyme neiþer han eiȝe ne tonge ne hond ne foot to helpe hem self for dronkenesse, & be þis ensaumple þe lewed peple weneþ þat dronkenesse<sup>1</sup> is no synne; but he þat wastiþ most pore mennys goodis at tauernes, makynge hym self & oþere men dronken, is most preised of nobleie & curtesie & goodnesse & largenesse & worþinesse<sup>2</sup> of þe world.<sup>3</sup> lord, hou wel ben þes dronken curatis disposid to serue god & mynystre sacramentis, & namely of confession in tyme of deþ, to here sugetis.

*Capitulum 16<sup>m</sup>.*

Will not commu-  
nicate those who  
have not paid  
tithes,  
or have not con-  
tributed to the  
crusade.

Spencer's crusade  
in Flanders.

þe sixtenþe; þei wolen not ȝeue þe sacramentis of þe *auter*, þat is cristis body, to here paryschenys, but ȝif þei paied here tipes & offryngis, & but ȝif þei han paied money to a worldly prest to slee cristene men. & ȝif men douten of þis, late hem enquere þe soþe hou it was whanne þe bischop of norwich went in-to flaundris, & killed hem bi many þousandis & made hemoure enemys. litel recken þes curatis in what deuocion & charite here parischenys resceynten cristis body, whanne þei openly taken hem vp fro goddis<sup>4</sup> bord, & stiren hem to vnpacience & enuye & hate for a litel muk þat þei chalengen to hem self.

<sup>1-1</sup> omitted X.

<sup>2</sup> added by a later hand in X.

<sup>3-3</sup> These words, omitted in X, are added as a correction in AA.

<sup>4</sup> omitted AA.

Capitulum 17<sup>m</sup>.

þe seuentenþe; þe ben blynde lederis ledynge þe blynde<sup>1</sup> peple to synne bi here euyl ensaunple & fals disceit in techynge, & at þe laste in-to helle; for þou; þei kunnen not o poynt of þe gospel ne whiten what þei reden, ȝit þei wolen take a fat benefice wiþ cure of mannis soule; & neiþer kunnen reule here owene soule ne oþere mennys, ne wolen spedly lerne ne suffre oþere men to teche here parischenys trewly & frely þe gospel & goddis hestis. And ȝit þei crien fast þat þe peple schal doo after hem, whenne þei knowe not þe riȝtte weie to heuene; & so þei leden þe symple peple in error & synne whanne þe peple weneþ for<sup>2</sup> to do wel, & maken þe peple to demen good euyl & euyl good, & to wende þe weie to helle whanne þei wenen to goo to heuene.

They will take benefices without knowing the gospel,

and stop other men from preaching.

Capitulum 18<sup>m</sup>.

þe eiȝtenþ; þei ben fals prophetis, techinge fals cronyclis & fablis to colour here worldly lif þerby, & leuen þe trewe gospel of ihū crist; for þei louen welle to telle hou þis seynt<sup>3</sup> or þis<sup>4</sup> lyuede in gay & costly cloþis & worldly aray, & ȝit is a grete seynt.<sup>4</sup> But þei leuen to teche þe grete penaunce & sorow þat þei diden after ward, for which þei<sup>5</sup> pleseden god & not for here worldly lif, & þus þei make þe peple to<sup>6</sup> wene þat worldly lif of preſtis & veyn cost of hem & waste of pore mennys goodis plesih god & is<sup>7</sup> vertuous lif, aȝenst cristis lif & his techynge & his apostlis also; & þei techen also hou for curs of a synful man þe creature of god, as a loof, þat trespasid not, was mowlid & fordon, & make þe peple bileue \*þat þat a goode cristene man kepyng welle goddis hestis schal be dampnyd for a wrongful curs of a worldly preſt, þat in caas is a dampnyd fend, & þus þei bryngen þe

They tell chronicles and fables when they preach, libelling the saints.

They relate false miracles.

\*[p. 130 MS.]

They teach that a good man may be damned by excommunication.

<sup>1</sup> omitted X.

<sup>2</sup> omitted X.

<sup>3-5</sup> omitted AA.

<sup>4-6</sup> X reads & ȝit it is a grete synne.

<sup>5</sup> cut away from margin in X.

<sup>6</sup> omitted X.

<sup>7</sup> his X.

peple out of<sup>1</sup> cristene feiþ bi here false cronyelis & <sup>2</sup>here sotele<sup>3</sup> fablis. For crist seiþ þat men schullen be blissed of god whanne men schullen curse hem & pursue hem & seie alle euyl aȝenst hem falsly for þe loue of crist & his trewþe. And þe peple bileueþ þe contrarie of þis techynge of crist bi þis fablis & seyntis dedis, or lesyngis putt on seyntis.

### Capitulum 19<sup>m</sup>.

They go shares  
with pardoners,  
who deceive the  
people

with stolen bulls  
and false relics;

but they bring  
the law to bear  
against an honest  
priest.

The pardoner  
gets<sup>1</sup> money<sup>2</sup> out  
of poor people,

and sends it  
abroad.

The people are  
made bold to re-  
main in sin.

þe neyntenþe; þei assenten to pardoners disceuyunge þe peple in feiþ & charite & worldly goodis for to haue part of here gederynge, & letten prestis to preche þe gospel for drede laste here synne & ypocrisie be knowen & stoppid; for whanne þere comeþ a pardoner wiþ stollen bullis & false relekis, grauntynge mo ȝeris of pardon þan comen bifore domes day for ȝeuyunge of worldly catel to riche placis where is no nede, he schal be sped & resceyued of curatis for to haue part of þat he getiþ; but a preste þat wole telle þe trewþe to alle men wiþ-oute glosyng & frely wiþ-oute beggyng of þe pore peple, he schal be lettid bi sotil canyllacions of mannus lawe, for drede last he touche þe sore of here conscience & cursed lif. & þis pardoner schalle telle of more power þan euere crist grauntid to petir or poul or any apostle, to drawe þe almes fro pore bedrede neiȝeboris þat ben knowen feble & pore, & to gete it to hem self & wasten it <sup>3</sup>ful synfulli<sup>3</sup> in ydelnesse & glotonye & lecherie, & senden gold out of oure lond to riche lordis & housis where is no nede & make oure lond pore by many sotle<sup>4</sup> weies; & here bi þe peple is more bold to <sup>5</sup>lien stille<sup>5</sup> in her<sup>6</sup> synne, & weneth not to haue as myche þank & reward of crist for to do<sup>7</sup> here almes to pore feble men, as crist biddiþ in þe gospel, as whanne þei don here almes to riche housis aftir graunt of synful foolis; & this is opyn erroure aȝenst cristene feiþ.

<sup>1</sup> omitted X.

<sup>4</sup> omitted X.

<sup>7</sup> omitted AA.

<sup>2-3</sup> omitted X.

<sup>5-6</sup> lyue X.

<sup>2-3</sup> omitted X.

<sup>6</sup> omitted X.

*Capitulum 20<sup>m</sup>.*

þe twentiþe; þat a prest of good lif & deuout & trewe  
 prechour of goddis lawe is dispised, hatid & pursued of They hate good  
priests and love  
bad ones;  
 worldly curatis, & a fals prest of worldly lif & aray þat  
 suffren men wexe roten in here cursed synne is louyd, preised  
 & cherischid among 'such synful folis;' for þei seyn þat such a  
 good prest is 'an ydiot and' an ypocrite & sclaudriþ men of they call a good  
priest a hypocrite  
and alanderer.  
 holy chirche & lettij men to do here deuocion to holy chirche;  
 & bi here dom a prest þat lineþ comyn worldly lif & stirij  
 no men to wrap bi' reprouynge hem of here opyn synnes  
 doþ moche worschipe to holy chirche & encresceþ mennus  
 deuocion; & þus for here coueitise & pride trewe prestis ben  
 put abak & dispised, & ydel prestis & worldly be preised &  
 cherischid, & þis makij many men slowe in good lif &  
 prechyng and manye \*to loue worldly lif & ydelnesse ' & [p. 131 MS.]  
 vanyte.<sup>4</sup>

*Capitulum 21<sup>m</sup>.*

þe on and twenteþe; þei hiden & meynntenen her synnes & Vicious curates  
hide their sins  
by taking office  
with lordes,  
 opere mennus bi proteccion & helpe of lordis, þat here  
 souereyns may not correcte hem ne compelle hem to resi-  
 dence. for whanne þer is' a vicious curat of lecherie or of'  
 vnkunnyng he wole haue lettris of kyng & lordis to dwelle and get letters  
from king or  
lordes,  
 in here courtis in worldly offices & be absent fro his cure;  
 þat his souereyn schal not dore correcte him for drede of his so that their  
superiours dare  
not punish them.  
 temperaltees & wrappe of lordis; & þus lordis ben made  
 schildis of synne for a litel money or worldly seruyce of  
 wickid curatis, þat riȝtwisnesse may not forþ 'in her vertuose  
 lyuyng.<sup>7</sup>

*Capitulum 22<sup>m</sup>.*

þe two & twen[t]iþe; þat many of hem vnder colour of  
 lernynge of þe gospel lerne statutis maade of synful men & They learn men's  
statutes instead  
of the gospel.

<sup>1</sup> hem X.<sup>2,3</sup> omitted X.<sup>3</sup> þe X.<sup>4</sup> omitted X.<sup>5</sup> his X.<sup>6</sup> omitted X.<sup>7</sup> omitted X.

worldly prestis, & lyuen in ydelnesse, glotonye, dronkenesse & lecherie, & ben euere þe lengere þe more vnable. For  
 When beneficed, whanne þei han grete benefices, peraventure by symonye, & connen not teche here sugetis to saue here soulis, & doren not holden here lemmannys at home for clamour of men, þei gon to scole & faren wel of mete & drenk & reste & studyen wiþ þe cuppe & <sup>1</sup> strumpatis; where goode prestis traueilen faste to lerne goddis lawe, þei gon for þe manere to cyuyle or canon, & don litel good þer at <sup>2</sup> as trewe men þinken<sup>3</sup>; & þus þei wasten pore mennus lifode in hordom & glotonye, & lernen lorelschipe, & to curse cristene men for here goodis, & ȝeuen to here sugettis ensauple of pride & coueitise & glotonye & lecherie & ydelnesse.

and afraid to keep their lemans at home, they go to the university and study with the cup and strumpets,

and learn rascality.

### Capitulum 23.<sup>3</sup>

The more knowing of them use their knowledge in maintaining sin.

If one can crack a little Latin in Civil or Canon Law, he is held wise,

though he can hardly read a verse in his Psalter.

þe þre & twentipe; þe more kunnyng men of hem myspenden here witt & kunnyng in meynテナunce of synne, as of pride & coueitise of clerkis & oppressyng of pore parischenys bi wrong customes for drede of plee & censuris, & meyntenynge false causis in constories for gold; & taken pensions of lecherous men & wommen for<sup>4</sup> to helpe hem to baþe hem in here synne as swyn in þe fen. & herby he þat can cracke a litil latyn in constories of heþene mennus lawe & worldly prestis lawe & can helpe to anoie a pore man bi knackis or chapitris, is holden a noble clerk & redy & wys, þou; he kunne not rede wel a vers in his sauter ne vnderstonden a comune auctorite of holy writt; & sicke knackeris ben as proude of here veyn kunnyng as lucifer, & setten not bi pore mennus kunnyng in goddis lawe, but dispisen hem & goddis lawe as þou; it were no lawe, & comenden here owene lawe & hem self more þan holy writt & ihū crist & his apostlis þat so blessedly lyueden<sup>5</sup>; & þis makip synne & falsnesse to<sup>6</sup> regne, & feip & treupe & charite be defoulid & quenchid.

<sup>1</sup> AA inserts here vicious.

<sup>2</sup> In X the heading of this chapter is omitted.

<sup>3,5</sup> omitted X.

<sup>2,3</sup> omitted X.

<sup>4</sup> omitted X.

<sup>6</sup> omitted X.

*Capitulum 24.*<sup>1</sup>

þe foure & twentipe; þat þei maken þe clene lawe of god vnder þe feet of anticrist & his clerkis, & treuþe of þe gospel be dampnyd for error & ignoraunce of worldly clerkis; for þes worldly clerkis þat lyuen in glotony & studien to drynke heiþe wynes<sup>2</sup> \* & base fisik wiþ strumpetis præsumen bi here pride to be domes men of sotil & heiþe mysterijs<sup>3</sup> & priue articlis of holy writt, & blyndly dampnen treuþes of cristis gospel, for þei ben aʒenst here worldly lif & fleshly lustis; & þes blynde bosardis wolen dampnen trewe men þat techen trewely & frely holy writt aʒenst here synnes to be heretikis, For no man schulde here goddis lawe tauwʒt bi suche trewe men, & þei hem self wole præche here owne tradicions & not þe gospel; & so holy writt schal be owtlawid or oppressid bi wronge statutis of synful mennys makynge; but certis alle cristene men schal crie out on þes deuelis blasphemyes & cursed heresies of anticrist & his worldly fonned clerkis.

They put the law of God under the feet of Antichrist

Worldly clerks decide on points of religion.  
\*[p. 132 M8.]

and condemn the truth because it is against them.

They will not let others preach, and themselves preach only their traditions.

*Capitulum 25.*<sup>4</sup>

þe fyue & twentipe error; þei chesen newe lawis maad of synful men & worldly & coueytise prestis & clerkis to reule þe peple bi hem as most nedful & best lawis, & forsaken þe perfiteste lawe of þe gospel & pistlis of crist & his apostlis, as not perfit ne fully ynou; ne trewe; for now heþene mennus lawis and worldly clerkis statutis ben red in vnyuersitees, & curatis lernen hem faste wiþ grete desir, studie & cost, but þe<sup>5</sup> lawe of god is litel studied, litel costid þer aboute, & lesse kept & tauʒt; but þe olde testament for wynnyng of tythes & offryngis is sumwhat practised; & þe gospel þat techeth cristis mekenesse & wilful pouert & bisi traueile; in præchyng to saue cristene soulis, for it constreyneth prestis to þis holy lif, is litel loued & studied & tauʒt but rapere dispised & hyndrid & maade fals bi<sup>6</sup> speche of anticristis clerkis. & in þis þei

They choose laws made of men, and neglect the laws of Christ.

Civil and Canon Law are read in the Universities,

but not the Bible, save the Old Testament in support of tithes.

<sup>1</sup> 23 X.<sup>2</sup> with wyues AA.<sup>3</sup> mynysters X.<sup>4</sup> 24 X.<sup>5</sup> omitted X.<sup>6</sup> techid X.<sup>7</sup> AA inserts þe uiciousse.

Thus they say  
that Christ gave  
an insufficient  
law.

seynt þat crist is vnwyttý, out of charite & treuþe, siþ he þaf  
not a sufficient lawe & þe beste for reuelynge of his peple, &  
þat worldly fonned clerkis of sathanas & anticrist ben wittiere,  
trewere & in more charite þan ihū crist, siþ here lawes ben  
betre & more nedful for cristene men þan þo<sup>1</sup> lawis þat crist  
himsilf<sup>2</sup> made. But on this blasphemye heresie schullen alle

Christians should  
reject these laws  
when not founded  
on the gospel.

cristene men crien out & take fully þe gospel to here reule<sup>3</sup> &  
helpe,<sup>4</sup> & not sette bi þes newe lawis 'maad of synful wrecchis'  
but in also moche as þei ben groundid in holy writt expresly  
or good reson & trewe conscience & charite; for as god bi  
seynt poul techiþ, who euere techiþ oþere lawes he is cursed  
of god; þe, þou; he were an angil of heuene; for god may  
not make oþere lawis aȝenst his gospel & charite, whi schulde  
anticrist & his clerkis?

Gal. i. 8.

### Capitulum 26<sup>m.</sup>

þe sixe and twentiþe; þei magnifyen hem self abouen crist  
god & man; for þei comaunden here sugetis þat þei owen not  
to iuge clerkis, ne here opyn werkis ne here techynge, But do  
aftir here techynge, be it trewe be it fals. But oure lord ihū  
crist comaundid his enemys to deme of hym a riȝtful dom &  
not aftir þe face. Also oure lord ihū bad his enemys bileue  
to his werkis þou; þei wolden not bileue to him, & bad þat  
\*men schulden not bileue to hym ȝif he dide not þe werkis of  
his fadir. ¶ Also crist bad to his enemys þat þei<sup>6</sup> schulde bere  
witnessse of euyl ȝif he had spoken euyle, & seynt poul biddiþ  
his hereris deme þat þat<sup>7</sup> he seide, where þes worldly foolis  
wolen be anticristis more maistris þan crist god & man, Siþ  
þei wolen not be demyd & amendid bi cristis<sup>8</sup> peple vnder  
hem of here opyn werkis aȝenst goddis hestis ne of here fals  
lesyngis þat þei techen in stede of cristis gospel. certis a  
more blasphemye ground castid neuere sathanas to norische  
synne of clerkis & fals disceit in techynge, & to lede blyndly  
cristene soulis to helle.

They bid their  
subjects not  
judge the clergy  
either for works  
or words.

Christ bade men  
judge him.  
John vii. 24.

John x. 38.

\*[p. 133 MS.]

John xviii. 23.

1 Cor. x. 15.

<sup>1</sup> þe X.

<sup>2</sup> omitted X.

<sup>3,4</sup> omitted X.

<sup>4-4</sup> omitted X.

<sup>5</sup> 26 X.

<sup>6</sup> he X.

<sup>7</sup> omitted X.

<sup>8</sup> cristene AA.



*Capitulum 27.*<sup>1</sup>

þe seuene and twentipe; þei ben anticristis lettyng cristene men to kunne here bileue & speken of holy writt; for þei crien opynly þat seculer men schullen not entirmeten hem of þe gospel to rede it in heir<sup>2</sup> modir tonge, but heere<sup>3</sup> her gostly fadris *preche* & do after hem in alle þingis; but þis is expressly aȝenst goddis techynge. For god comaundiþ generally to eche lewid man þat he schal haue goddis hestis bi-fore hym & teche hem to his children<sup>4</sup> & also to hise meyne,<sup>5</sup> & þe wise man biddiþ euery cristene man þat alle his tellynge be in þe hestis of god altherhiȝest,<sup>6</sup> & þat he haue euere more in mynde þe comaundementis of god. And seynt petir biddiþ cristene men be redi to ȝeue reson of oure feiþ & ope to teche eche man þat axit it, & god comaundid his preſtis to preche þe gospel to eche man, & þe skille is for alle men schulden kunne it and reule here lif þer aftir. lord, whi schulde worldly preſtis forbede seculer men to speke of þe gospel & goddis hestis, siþ god ȝeueþ hem gret witt of kynde & gret desir to knowen god & louen him. for þe more goodnesse þat þei knowen of god þe more þei schullen loue god. where worldly preſtis schullen for here owene vnkunnyngnesse & sleuþe & ydelnesse & pride<sup>6</sup> stoppe cristene men to knowe god & serue hym vp þe ȝiftis þat god ȝeueþ hym. heȝere scole of anticrist to distroie cristene mennys bileue & charite herde neuere creature fro makynge of þe world þan is þis blasphemye heresia, þat lewid men schulden not entirmeten hem of þe gospel.

They forbid secular men to read the gospel in their mother tongue.

God bids every man to keep his commandments before him.

Deut. vi. 6.

Eccius. vi. 37.

1 Peter iii. 15.

The more men know God the more they will love him.

*Capitulum 28.*<sup>m.7</sup>

þe eiȝte & twentipe; þei disceyuen cristene men in doynge of verray penaunce; for þei doren not telle þe soþe hou nedis þei mosten forsake alle falsnesse in craftis, in opis, & alle synne vp here kunnyng & power, & for no good in erþe wityngly & wilfully do aȝenst goddis hestis, neiþer for lucre ne drede ne bodily deþ, & ellis it is not verrey contricion, &

They dissuade men as to penance, for they dare not insist upon amendment as essential to contricion,

<sup>1</sup> 26 X.

<sup>2</sup> omitted X.

<sup>3</sup> omitted X.

<sup>4</sup> omitted X.

<sup>5</sup> alyerhiȝest X.

<sup>6</sup> X inserts &.

<sup>7</sup> 27 X.

<sup>8</sup> [p. 124 MS.]

and to absolu-  
tion;

but they speak  
much of tithes  
and offerings.

Thus they lead  
people to trust to  
priest's absolu-  
tion without true  
penance;

and say that a  
man who is truly  
contrite cannot  
be saved without  
shrift.

ellis god wole not asoile hem for no confession of moueþ, ne for assoilynge of prestis, ne bullis of pardon, ne lettris of fraternyte, ne massis, ne preieris of ony creatur<sup>1</sup> in erþe or in<sup>2</sup> þe blis of<sup>3</sup> heuene; but þei speken mochl of tipes & offryngis in þis confession, & litel of restitucion & doynge of almes to pore bedrede<sup>4</sup> men, But of masse pens & chirche gaynesse. & herby þe peple is brouȝt out of bileue, tristyng þat here synne is forȝoue for here prestis assoilynge, þou; þei don not verrey penaunce as god techeth hym self. And herby þei magnifyen more here owene assoilynge þan assoilynge of god for verrey contricion, whanne god him self seiþ<sup>5</sup> in what kynne hour a synnere haþ inwardly<sup>6</sup> sorowe for his synnys he schal be saue, þei wolen make þis word<sup>7</sup> fals, seyng þat he schal not be saf be he neuere so contrit wiþouten schrifte of mouþ maad to hem,<sup>8</sup> þat ben in cas þe fendis procuratours to disceyuen men in here soulis helþe for here vnkunnynge & pride & coueitise.

### Capitulum 29<sup>m.3</sup>

They rob people  
by their excom-  
munications,

and make them  
uphold wrong  
customs.

þe neyne & twentiþe; þei robben cristene peple of goodis of fortune, of goodis of kynde & goodis of grace bi feyned censuris of here owen lawis; for þei cursen so dispitusly ȝif men paie not monye at here lykyng, þat þei chalengen bi synful mannis lawis & newe customes & deuociouns & not of goddis lawe, þat no man dar wiþ-seie hem in here wrong for drede of curs, prisonynge, & lesyngis of pacience & charite; & herbi þei maken cristene men as bestis holde forþ here wrong customes & mannis lawe, & not knowe goddis lawe & þe riȝtte weie to heuene. certis it were lasse cruelte to suspende men fro bodily mete & drynk & make hem dede bodily þan to suspende hem fro herynge of þe gospel & goddis hestis, þat is lif of þe soule. lord, hou cursed anticristis ben þes worldly prelatis & curatis þat cursen trewe men for prechyng & herynge of holy writt.

<sup>1</sup> curature X.

<sup>4</sup> omitted X.

<sup>7</sup> synful men AA.

<sup>2,3</sup> omitted X.

<sup>5</sup> in worldly X.

<sup>8</sup> 28 X.

<sup>3</sup> bedere X.

<sup>6</sup> lord AA.

*Capitulum 30<sup>m</sup>.*

þe þrittiþe; þei taken not dymes & offryngis bi forme of þe olde testament & partyn hem in comyn to alle prestis & mynystres nedful in þe chirche, ne bi forme of þe gospel takynge a symple lifode þouen of free deuocion of þe peple wiþ-outen constreynynge & cursynge, as crist & his apostlis diden. but bi þe newe lawe of synful men o prest chalengijþ him self alle tiþes of a gret contre bi worldly plee & newe censures; & neiþer lyueþ as a good prest, ne techiþ as a curat, ne deliþ þe residue to pore men as a good cristene man.

They do not take tithes according to the Old Testament, nor ask a simple living according to the New Testament; but one priest takes all the tithes of a large district.

\*But wastiþ hem in pompe & glotonye & opere<sup>1</sup> synnes, & lettiþ trewe prestis to do þe office enyoyned to hem bi god almyȝtty. certis it semeþ þat þes ben not prestis after goddis lawe but after synful mennus ordynaunce, to be maistris of god & lordis of cristene peple, siþ þei holden neuer neiþer lawe of god in<sup>2</sup> dymes takynge, & taken hem bi vyolence & stronge curses aȝenst mennus goode wille, & maken þe peple out of pacience & charite bi here pledynge, & don not wel here gostly office.

\*[p. 135 MS.]

*Capitulum 31<sup>m</sup>.*

þe on & þrittiþe; þat at ensauple of serpentis þei seruen biaily to lordis in seculer offices for nouȝt as who seiþ, and in þe ende poisonen þe lordis wiþ venym of symonye þat is worse þan any bodily poison. & whanne þei han a benefice wiþ cure of mennus soule þei dwellen stille in worldly office of lordis, & spenden pore mennus lifode in riot & wombe ioie, & suffren cristene men perische in body & soule for defaute of techynge & werkis of mercy. how cursed serpentis ben þis weiward curatis þat þus enuenumyn hem self, þe lordis & communes wiþ venym of symonye, of pride & glotonye & alle manere of synne.

They serve lords for nothing to get a benefice when they have a benefice, they neglect their cure, and still take worldly office. They are serpents who spread the venom of simony.

<sup>1</sup> AA. inserts synful.<sup>2</sup> & X.

*Capitulum 32<sup>m</sup>.*

They make lords and commons maintain bad priests,  
 under pretence of maintaining the liberties of the Church.  
 New service.  
 So Antichrist's priests are maintained.

þe two & þrittiþe; þei maken lordis & comunes bi blynd deuocion & ypocrisie to meynntenen worldly clerkis in pride, coueitis & ydelnesse & false techynge of anticristis erroris vndir colour of fredom & worschipyng of holy chirche & goddis lawe. For þei crien faste þat lordis & comunes moten meynntenen goddis seruauantis in his seruyce & þe lawis & þe<sup>1</sup> libertes of holy chirche, & maken newe seruyce likynge to worldly mennus eris & newe lawis & customes for here owene wynnynge & pride, & leuen þat seruyce & clene lawe þat god made to prestis for most profit on eche side. & þus whanne lordis & comyns wenen to meynntenen goddis prestis & his lawe, þei meynntenen anticristis prestis and<sup>2</sup> here lawis & wrong customes & pride & opere synnes in-stede of mekenesse & opere vertues, & magnifyenge of mennus lawis & dispisyng of goddis lawis.

*Capitulum 33<sup>m</sup>.*

þe þre & þrittiþe; þei techen cristene men to blaspheme god & holden werre aȝenst hym; for þei techen cristene men to meynntenen mennys lawis & ordynaunces for betre & more nedful þan þe clene lawe of crist & his witty ordynaunce; & crien faste, ȝif cristene men meynntenen þe multitude of worldly clerkis in here newe lawis & customes & libertes þei schullen haue goddis blissyng & prosperite & pees & reste, bi so many deuout prestis seculer & religious preiynge, redynge & syngynge nyȝt & day; & ȝif þei wolden bryng prestis out of þis glorious lif & new song to mekenesse & gostly pouert & bisi trauelle in lernynge & prechyng of þe gospel, as crist & his apostlis diden, þei schullen be cursed & haue weire & myschif, boþe in þis \*world & þe toþer;<sup>3</sup> & þis makeþ þe blynde peple to werre aȝenst god & his ordynaunce & pursuen his techeris as<sup>4</sup> heretikis. ¶ O ȝe curatis, seeþ þes heresies &

They teach that if men maintain worldly clerks, they shall be rewarded through their prayers,  
 and if they try to make priests live holy life they will be cursed, etc.  
 \*[p. 136 MS.]  
 Apostrophe to curates.

<sup>1</sup> omitted AA.<sup>2</sup> in X.<sup>3</sup> þat opere AA.<sup>4</sup> AA inserts heþen.

blasphemyes & many moo suynges of þoure wickid lif & weiward techynge, & forsake hem for drede of helle, & turne to good lif & trewe techynge of þe gospel & ordynaunce of god, as crist & his apostlis diden, for reward of heuenely blisse, & in confessions & opere spechis charge þe more brekenge of goddis hestis þan brekynges of foly bihestis of newe pylgrymagis & offryngis; & teche cristene men to turne suche fonnyd a-vowis in-to betre almes, as crist techiþ in þe gospel. Almyghty god brynge curatis in-to holy lif & trewe techynge after crist & his apostlis. Amen.

## VIII.

## THE ORDER OF PRIESTHOOD.

Of this tract I can only say that it may be by Wyclif. If so it must be one of the earliest of his English tracts, written before his order of poor priests had been fully organized. It may be taken to express that strong sense of the faults prevalent among the clergy which led him to institute his order of preachers.

The writer was certainly a zealous lover of his University, as may be seen from his complaint (Chapter xxiii.) that the clergy stir rich men to support chaplains and chantry priests rather than poor scholars.

Chapter xxii. deserves notice for its attack on priests who excite the people to war by processions and public prayers. (Cf. p. 170, l. 3.) Is this utterance due only to a personal horror of bloodshed, or does it point to the existence of a peace party?

Copied from the Corpus MS. X. and collated with the Dublin MS. AA.

## SUMMARY.

- CHAP. I. Priests commit simony in using influence and bribes to be ordained.
- II. Priests sell their masses, and offer a share in the mass to those who pay them.
- III. Priests are so ignorant that they cannot read the service properly.
- IV. Priests live idle and luxurious lives, haunting taverns, etc.
- V. Priests neglect their duties and take secular office with lords.
- VI. Priests take money to say prayers and by evil life make their prayers vain.
- VII. Priests care chiefly for new song, which sets people dancing, but hides the words of Holy Writ.
- VIII. Priests care more to keep the Ordinal of Salisbury than God's commandments.
- IX. Priests take rash vows of chastity and do not keep them.
- X. Priests fear to reprove vice in their patrons.
- XI. Priests who preach falsely are Satans transformed etc.
- XII. Worldly priests seek their own gain more than the good of souls.

- CHAP. XIII. Priests carry on business as maltsters and cattle-dealers.
- XIV. They care more for forms of service than for following God's commands.
- XV. Covetousness of worldly priests.
- XVI. Too many men become priests, because the life is an easy one.
- XVII. The excuses priests make for sin.
- XVIII. Priests do not try to keep their patrons from sin.
- XIX. Many priests poison their masters' minds against true teachers.
- XX. Priests claim falsely the power of restricting and assigning the benefit of their prayers.
- XXI. They teach men to give money to friars instead of doing good to their poor neighbours.
- XXII. They excite the people to unjust wars.
- XXIII. They get rich men to waste their gifts on mass-priests and law-students.
- XXIV. They get men to found chantries for useless priests.
- XXV. They lead men to trust to their prayers more than to good life.
- XXVI. They persecute God's servants and slander his law.
- XXVII. Priests break God's law from fear of the bishops.
- XXVIII. They cease to obey God by preaching, etc., because the bishop suspends them.
- XXIX. Nobleness of priest's office and exhortation to priests and nobles.

þis is for þe ordre of presthod.

### Capitulum primum.

For þe ordre of presthod is ordeyned of god boþe in þe  
Faults of priests. olde lawe & þe newe, And many prestis kepen it ful euele,  
 telle we summe errours of prestis to amende hem wiþ goddis  
Simony. grace. First, comynly þei comen to here ordriþ by symonye  
In taking orders for low motives. many weies, for þei ben more maad prestis for worldly honour  
 & aisy lif & welfare of body þan for deuocion to lyue in  
 clenness & holynesse & penaunce, & gret gostly traueile in  
 preieris & studyng & techyng of goddis lawe, & to suffre  
 persecucion & sclandre & prisonyng perfore; & so þei sillen  
 in manere þe spiritual lif of cristis<sup>1</sup> apostilis & discipulis for a  
 litel drit & wombe ioie, & þis is cursed gostly symonye &  
In using influence to get ordination even when unfit. heresie bifore god. & what lettris & preieris þei maken for  
 to ben ordrid prestis whanne þei ben vnable boþe of lif &  
 kunnyng men may knowen opynly, & þis is styngyng<sup>2</sup>  
In payments to bishop's officers. heresie of symonye; & þit þei ȝeuen a gret raunson to  
 bischopis officers for lettris & veyn customes or þei may be  
 ordrid & do execucion of here office; & þouȝ prelatiþ & here  
 officeris ben grettere heretikis for sillyng of þes ordriþ & þis  
 extorcion doynge, neþeles þes prestis ne beþ not alle excused  
 for þei consenten þer-to raþere þan þei wolen be harde  
 examynynd & lettid of here ordriþ. sumtyme holy men &  
 kunnyng is-scheweden<sup>3</sup> to be prestis for heigennesse of þe  
 ordre. But now ȝonge childre vnable boþe of lif & kunnyng  
 presen faste to be prestis in name &<sup>4</sup> not in dede, & aftirward  
 wolen not bisien hem to lerne, But bete stretis vp & down &  
 syng & pleie as mynystrelis, & vse vanytees & ydelnesse.

Formerly holy men eschewed the priesthood from modesty. Mere children get themselves ordained and lead useless lives.

### Capitulum 2<sup>m</sup>.

Will not say mass except for money. Also þei lyuen comynly in symonye, sillyng here massis  
 & þe sacrament of cristis body for worldly muk & wombe

<sup>1</sup> crist X. <sup>2</sup> styngyng AA. <sup>3</sup> eschewen AA. <sup>4</sup> X inserts not in name &.



ioie; for comynly þei wolen sille here masse for annuel salarie,  
 & ellis not dwellen wiþ a man but where þei may most  
 wynne, & seyn more þe masse for loue of þe peny þan for  
 deuocion or charite to cristē & cristene soulis. \*for be þe <sup>[p. 137 MS.]</sup>  
 masse seide in herynge of þe peple schortly & vndewoutly, <sup>and say it irreuerently.</sup>  
 litel sauour of holynesse schal men fynden wiþ hem, but  
 nycete & pleye & goyngē to þe tauerne & opere vanytes. it  
 semeþ resonable þat a goode prest haue resonable liflode to  
 serue god of wilful almes of þe peple, & not bi lonyngē &  
 bedyngē as who wold selle a worldly þing; for þe prest may <sup>The priest cannot make his master a sharer in his mass.</sup>  
 not make his <sup>1</sup> maister lord ne partyner of his masse, but only  
 god for his goode lif & <sup>2</sup> charite; but many prestis don þe  
 masse more for money & bodily welfare þan for deuocion &  
 worschipe of god, & wollen not don þe masse but for hope  
 of worldly wynnyngē; & certis alle þes sellen cristē as iudas <sup>Those who say mass only for money are worse than Judas.</sup>  
 dide, & worse, for he is nowē knowen for god & glorified in  
 his masede, & nowē haþ schewid mo benefices to mankynde  
 þan he hadde do in iudas tymes, & alle þes condicions  
 aggregen þis cursed sillyngē of cristis body.

### Capitulum 3<sup>m</sup>.

Also þei sclaudren & defoulen þe holy ordre of presthod  
 bi worldly lif & ignoraunce <sup>3</sup> of holy writ <sup>4</sup>; for sumtyme god <sup>Ignorance of priests. Hosea iv. 9.</sup>  
 seide bi his prophete in reprof of worldly prestis þat þe prest  
 is as þe peple. But nowē, as seynt bernard seiþ, prestis ben <sup>Bernard.</sup>  
 more worldly & vicious þan þe comune peple, þat bi hem þe  
 peple takij ensaumple & boldnesse <sup>4</sup> in synne; & þei ben so  
 vnkunnyngē þat men scornen hem in seyngē of here seruyce, <sup>Their reading is ridiculed.</sup>  
 & <sup>5</sup> redyngē of here pistil & gospel. but god seiþ to such a  
 prest: þou hast caste a weie kunnyngē of my lawe & I schal <sup>Hosea iv. 6.</sup>  
 caste þe aweie þat þou be not sette in presthod to me. & þit  
 ignoraunce of good lif & goddis hestis is werse þan ignoraunce  
 of latyn or of ony opere langage; þerfore prestis schulden don  
 here bisynesse to lyue wel & vnderstonde & knowe goddis

<sup>1</sup> in X.    <sup>2</sup> in AA.    <sup>3</sup> & holy X.    <sup>4</sup> boldnesse X.    <sup>5</sup> in X.

Mal. ii. 7. wille & teche it in word & dede, & be<sup>1</sup> myrroure of holynesse to þe peple, & goddis angelis, as god seiþ bi þe prophete.

### Capitulum 4<sup>m</sup>.

Priests lie long  
abed,  
hurry through  
their services.

haunt taverns,  
talk loosely.

Prestis also sclaundren þe peple bi ensauple of ydelnesse & wauntounnesse; for oomynly þei chouchen<sup>2</sup> in softe beddis whanne oþere men risen to here labour, & blabren out matynys & masse as hunteris wiþ-outen deuocion & contemplacion, & hien faste to mete richely & costly arayed of þe beste, & þan to slepe; & soone a-noon to tablis & chees & tauerne & betynge of pauement, & þan speken of lecherie, of de-prauynge of goode men, þat wolen<sup>3</sup> not sue here companye; & þanne comeþ dronkennesse, chidyng & fyttyng & many tymes mansleyng, & bi þes prestis & here wantownesse moche peple is brouȝt to lecherie, glotonye, ydelnesse & þefte.

### Capitulum 5<sup>m</sup>.

Priests take too  
much worldly  
business to win  
preferment—

as kitchen-clerks  
and rent collec-  
tors.

\*[p. 138 MS.]  
Work harder for  
worldly profit  
than God's ser-  
vants.

Also prestis occupien hem ouer moche in worldly occu-pacions & secular offices aȝenst holy writt for plesynge of lordis & hope of benefices; for comunly prestis ben stiwardis & clerkis of kechene & resceyuouris & rente gedereris & hunteris, & leuen here gostly office vndon, & han more \*wakyng & rekenyng & traueille for a litel worschipe & muk þan haue many trewe seruauntis of god for alle here doynge, & þe endis ben ful dyuerse. for þe first bisynesse & care, but if god helpe þe more, bryngþ euerlastyng care & peyne of helle; & þe toþer<sup>4</sup> liȝt traueille & ioiful bryngiþ euer-lastyng blisse of heuene in body & soule.

### Capitulum 6<sup>m</sup>.

Priests offer vain  
prayers for  
money.

Prestis also disceyuen cristen men bi here veyn preieris & abhominable to god for here lecherie & oþere synnes; for þei taken ful mochil hire for to seie here matynes & masse &

<sup>1</sup> by AA.

<sup>2</sup> couchen AA.

<sup>3</sup> omitted X.

<sup>4</sup> þat other AA.

opere deuocions, & þer-wiþ ben foul lechouris,<sup>1</sup> ful of pride & coueitise, glotonye & ydelnesse; & maken þe peple wene þat here preieris ben acceptable to god, & ȝit god seiþ bi his prophete þat he curseþ suche wickid mennus blissyngis, and <sup>Mal. ii. 2.</sup> þat mannus preiere is abhominable & cursed þat turneþ a wey <sup>Prov. xxviii. 9.</sup> his here & heriþ not goddis lawe; & god seiþ bi þe prophete ysaie to suche wickid men þat he wol not here hem whanne <sup>Isaiah i. 18.</sup> þei maken many preieris; for who lyueþ <sup>Good life the best prayer.</sup> best preieþ best, Austyn. & no man preiþ wel but ȝif he leue wel, as austyn & opere doctours techen pleynly, þanne is here a gret disceit of euyl prestis. For whan men purposen to fynde trewe seruauntis to god, þei fynden his enemys & traitours, & here preieris cursed of god for here synful lif.

### Capitulum 7<sup>m</sup>.

Also þei magnyfien more newe songe founden of synful men þan þe gospel of ihū crist, þat is cristene mennus saluacion; for þei bisien hem fastere to kunne & do & teche þis newe song þan to kunne & kepe & teche cristis gospel; & <sup>New fashioned chaunting hides the sense;</sup> þis is merueile, for þis song distractiþ þe syngere fro deuocion & lettiþ men fro consceiuyng of þe sentence; &, as austyn & gregory techen wel, preiere is betre herd of god bi compunccion & wepyng & stille deuocion, as moyses & ihū crist diden, þan bi gret crynge & ioly chaustyng þat stireþ men & wommen to daunsyng & lettiþ men fro þe sentence of <sup>sets men and women dancing.</sup> holy writt, as Magnyficat, sanctus & agnus dei, þat is so broken bi newe knackyng. it semeþ þat god seiþ bi þes newe singeris as he dide in þe gospel to pharisees, "þis peple <sup>Matt. xv. 8.</sup> honoureþ me wiþ lippis but here herte is fer fro me, þei worschipeþ me wiþ-uten cause, techyng lore & comaunde-mentis of men." moyses & ihū crist & his apostlis preiden bi <sup>Apostles prayed quietly by night.</sup> nyȝt stillely in hilles, wiþ clenness of lif & gret desir of riȝtwisnesse & brennyng charite to frende & enemys, & here fore god herde hym graciously. but now newe men crien <sup>These new ways unlike theirs.</sup>

<sup>1</sup> lecherous X.<sup>2</sup> omitted X.<sup>3</sup> leueth X.

hiȝe to mennus eris wiȝ stynckynge lecherie, pride, coueitise & oþere synnes, & in wille to meyntene synful mennus ordynance contrarie to goddis ordynaunce, & desiren cruel vengauce on here enemys; & herefore we axen oure owene dampnacion in þis preiere, & ȝif god suffre vs haue oure desir, þat is vengauce of god to haue oure wille to grettere peynes of \*helle, for god hatip vs.

\*[p. 139 MS.]

### Capitulum 8<sup>m</sup>.

They care more for the Salisbury Ordinal than for Christian life.

ȝit þei chargen more þe ordynal of salusbury þan þe hestis of god; for ȝif a prest faile a poynt of his ordynal, þat is no poynt of cristene mennus feip, he schal be reproued scharly & openly anon & of manye. But þou; a prest faile opynly aȝenst goddis hestis bi veyn swerynge, bi pride, bi coueitise & vanyte & ydelnesse noman almost chargip þat, but lieȝeþ & iapiȝ & helpip hym þer-to. ful vnable ben þes foolis to mynystre sacramentis & to be mediators bitwixe god & synful man.<sup>1</sup>

### Capitulum 9<sup>m</sup>.<sup>2</sup>

Priests take vows rashly and are often unchaste.

They live sumptuously and idly.

Daily with nice women.  
1 Cor. ix. 27.

2 Cor. xii. 7.

Also many prestis vnwisly taken a wow of chastite & defoulen wyues, widewis & maydens; For þei taken presthod for to lyuen esely & fare wel, & take no reward to here heiȝe hoot complexon, but norischen it in welfare of mete & drynk of þe beste & riche clopis & softe beddis, & traueilen not, & ben ȝonge & idel & list chered & wordid & han<sup>3</sup> daliaunce wiȝ nyce wommen; & alle þis bryngeþ many brondis of lecherie; & siȝ seynt poul chastised his flesch wiȝ so gret traueile & peyne & abstynence, & ȝit vnnepis myȝte he ouercome lustis of lecherie, hou may þes ȝonge foolis clene be kept fro þis synne wiȝ þis<sup>4</sup> lusty lif & idel & daliaunce of wommen.

<sup>1</sup> men AA.

<sup>2</sup> In AA the numbering of this chapter is omitted, so that all which follow it are numbered one less than they should be.

<sup>3</sup> omitted X.

<sup>4</sup> omitted X.

*Capitulum 10<sup>m</sup>.*

Also þei doren not reprove men of here opyn synnes bi forme of þe gospel for displeisyng of here maistris & leesyng of here salarie; for many of hem seyn þus: "I wole not displeise him of whom I haue my lyuyng." a, 3e blynde foolis, drede 3e more to lese a morsel of mete þan o poynt of charite? drede 3e more to offende an erþely wrecche þan god almytty? loue 3e more wombe ioie & worldly myrþe þan þank of god & ioie of heuene? sette 3e more prise bi þoure stynkyng bely þan bi þoure lord? 3e reueren god & worschipe false goddis many weies & ben hugely cursed of þe holy trinite & alle his angelis. hou doren 3e, cursed wrecchis, seie þoure masse in þis lif to þoure dampnacion, 1 Cor. xi. 29. as god seiþ bi seynt poull, & ofte 3e reden it.

*Capitulum 11<sup>m</sup>.*

Also for gostly liȝt of good ensaunple & trewe techyng þei hilden out foul derkenesse of many synnys; for siȝ god seiþ bi his prophete þat a prest is aungel of god, þat is a messenger to telle goddis wille to þe peple, & þei leuen þis & tellen lesyngis & wrecchidnessis of synnys, þei ben angeles of sathanas transfigurid into<sup>1</sup> angelis of liȝt; for þei han name of holynesse & of goddis trewe seruautis & ben not so in dede. & siȝ crist seiþ in þe gospel þat prestis owen to be salt of þe erþe & liȝt of þe world, þat is myrrour & ensaunple to make men bareyne fro synne & bi liȝt of trewe techyng bryng heþene men to cristene feiȝ, hou ben þei not traitours to god \* & procuratouris of sathanas whanne þei leuen þus \* [p. 140 MS.] gostly lif & trewe prechyng of the gospel & ȝeuen ensaunple of synne & boldnesse þer-inne?

*Capitulum 12<sup>m</sup>.*

Also worldly prestis ben anticristis disciplis, sekyng here owene worldly honour<sup>2</sup> & wynnyng more þan goddis, & souls.

<sup>1</sup> & to X.<sup>2</sup> hous X.

1 John ii. 22.

Isidore and  
Jerome.

helpe of mennys soulis; for þei traueilen faste aboute here owene worldly honour and lucre & ben wode þif ony man speke aȝenst hem, but of goddis worschipe & helpe of cristene soulis chargen þei ful litel; & þat semeþ wel bi here lif, studye & spekyng, for it is aboute worldly goodis & not aboute studie & techyng of holy writt; & ion þe ensaungelist seiþ & seyn austyn declariþ þat þo men þat þus denyen ihū ben anticristis, & settiþ ensauple of forsworen men, of lechouris & coueitouse men & vsureris<sup>1</sup> & many moo; & seynt ysedore & ierom accorden þer-to.

### Capitulum 13<sup>m</sup>.

Priests are  
traders, etc.,horse dealers,  
maltsters,  
cattle dealers,meddlers at love  
days.Bad priests the  
worst of wicked  
men.

Prestis also ben machauntis,<sup>2</sup> as comunly as<sup>3</sup> worldly men & more sotil & falsere, & leuen here gostly office; for þei ben corseris & makers of malt, & bien schep & neet & sellen hem for wynnyng, & beten marketis, & entermeten hem of loundedaies, holdyng wiþ fors of armes, þat þei ben myrrour of coueitise & worldly lif & pride & of discencion amonge cristene peple, for of alle wicked men weiward prestis ben chif whanne þei turne to cursednesse, for þei ben sotil & han reste & þe fend is more maistir in hem for brekyng of þe holy ordre.

### Capitulum 14<sup>m</sup>.

Priests care more  
for forms of  
service than for  
preaching and  
good life.Pretend devout-  
ness.

Also þei ben foule ypocritis, clensyng þe gnatte & swolwyng þe g[r]ete camaile alhool; for þif þei failen in manere of here song & opere newe sygnes founden of synful men þei chargen þat as a greuous synne for to be dampnyd in helle þerfore, but þou; þei failen foule in prechyng of cristis gospel & holdyng of goddis hestis þei chargen not a straw, but rapere letten, dispisen & pursuen falaly þo prestis þat bisien hem to do þis grete poynt of charite; & þit<sup>4</sup> þes ypocritis feynen hem ful holy in siȝte of þe peple, & knelyng

<sup>1</sup> usuris X.<sup>2</sup> marchauntis AA.<sup>3</sup> omitted X.<sup>4</sup> þit added in X by a later hand.

& knockynge on here brest & opere signes, as þif þei wolen flee to god al hool, & þit ben his stronge enemys & disceyueris of his peple.

### Capitulum 15<sup>m</sup>.

þit þes worldly prestis ben lik to helle, neuere ful of Prov. xxvii. 20. coueitis in no degree; for þei connen not be a-paied wiþ a resonable liflode ne resonable clopinge, but euere redy to take of alle men þou; þei han no nede, & euele dispenden it & quiten not aȝen but stynkyng preiere bifore god, & lyuen forþ in ydelnesse & pride & opere vanytes; for here herte is ouermoeche on worldly goodis &<sup>1</sup> veyn statis, what euere þe tonge sch[e]wiþ wiþ-uten forþ. & this is a venymous rote þat makiþ here seruyce & preieris not acceptable to god & helpful to cristene peple as þei schulden be. \* þerfore þis coueitis schulde be fled of alle prestis, as ground of alle synnes as poul seiþ.

Covetousness of priests.  
Take all they can and pay only in bad prayers.

Idleness.

[p. 141 MS.]

1 Tim. vi. 10.

### Capitulum 16<sup>m</sup>.

Also þei ben þeues, robberyng pore men of here sustenance bi colour of holynesse; for þei hiȝen faste to be prestis mo þan ben nedful for þe peple, for to haue easy lif & welfare & han<sup>2</sup> þe almes þat god ordeyned to pore nedy men þat han not of here owene & may not labore for sikenesse or<sup>3</sup> elde; & al is demyd holynesse for helpe of here preieris, & þit þe beste of hem wot not what his preiere is worþe & where it turne to his owene dampnacion or saluacion. & certis þat man þat loueþ best god preieþ best, not for o man only but for alle men þat ben able to haue part þer-of, be he schephe[r]de or ploughman.<sup>4</sup> þerfore prestis owen to lyuen wel & wasten not pore mennus liflode in pride, glotonye & opere vanytes.

Men take orders because it is an easy life,

and eat up the alms that should keep the poor.

The best prayer is that of the man who loves God best.

<sup>1</sup> omitted AA.

<sup>2</sup> omitted X.

<sup>3</sup> of X.

<sup>4</sup> plowþman X.

*Capitulum 17<sup>m</sup>.*

The excuses  
priests make  
for sin.

Prestis weiward of lif turnen vpsodoun cristis techynge bi lesyngis & ypocrisie; for þei colouren pride wiþ honeste & clenness, wraþþe & vengauce bi manlynesse & riȝtwisnesse, enuye bi prudence & wisdom, coueitise bi riȝt traueile & wis keypyng of goodis to do almes in nede & pursuynge of riȝt, sleuþe bi sauynge of mannes body & worþinesse, glotonye bi largenesse & fedyng of pore men & helpynge of vitaleris & oþere men of craftis, dronkenesse bi good felaweschipe & gendryng of charite & solasyng of mennus wittis, lecherie bi helpynge forþ of þe world & kyndely dede; & þis þei don to excuse here owene synne, & norischen oþere men þer-inne for þank & worldly wynnyng; but certis þes ben anticristis & perilous heretikis.

*Capitulum 18<sup>m</sup>.*

They fail to warn  
their patrons of  
their sins.

Also þei ben foule ypocritis & setten more prise be an oxe, hors or asse þan bi þe soule of here maistir þat costliþ mychil on hem; for ȝif þei seen vnresonable bestis of here maistris or oþere mennus fallen in a perilous lake þei wolen traueile & helpe & crien to men aboute til þe vnresonable beste be out of perils; but þouȝ here maistris<sup>1</sup> soule be in þe foule lake of old custumable synne, & body & soule in poynt to be dampned wiþ-out ende, þei schullen not helpe to bryng hem out of þis peril, neiþer bi trewe conseilyng ne trewe prechyng ne stiryng of gostly frendis to þis helpe; & her-by þei schewen þat here herte is seeit to loue his muk & not is soule. but where ben falsere traitouris þan þes prestis þat wole not helpe here maistris<sup>2</sup> out of þis moste peril, but rapere norische hem & conseille hem þer-inne for to haue here owene lustis & welfare.

*Capitulum 19<sup>m</sup>.*

Many of them  
poison their  
masters' minds  
against good  
priests,

Many of hem poisonen<sup>3</sup> gostily here maistris for þe benefices þat þei receyuen of hem; for þei conseilen here maistris faste

<sup>1</sup> maistir X.

<sup>2</sup> his maistre X.

<sup>3</sup> poison X.



þat þei tristen not to pore prestis & witty clerkis trewely techynge þe gospel & comaundementis of god & where men owe to do here almes, but lyuen forþ after \*olde errouris & lesyngis & anticristis prechouris þat prechen for here wynnyng & fablis & newe soteltes for veyn name of clergie, & bidde hem do as here fadris diden, þat many tyme lyuede in falsnesse to gete goodis of þis world and myspendeden<sup>1</sup> hem in pride & glotonye, & þei witen neuere where þei dieden out of charite & ben dampned in helle; & þus þei conseilen here maistris to lyue forþ in here cursede synne & not to amende hem.

\*[p. 142 MS.]  
and bid them to  
go on in old bad  
ways.

### Capitulum 20<sup>m</sup>.

Also þei disceyuen þe peple in feiþ of cristendom; for þei maken þe peple ween þat þei schullen not haue part of here preieris, þouþ þei ben in charite, but ȝif þei paien moche money to a prest þat is ydel & vicious. for ȝif men wisten þat þei schulden haue part of alle goode preieris bi mercy of god as moche as is riȝtful, þei wolden do here almes to here pore neiȝeboris as crist biddiþ, & not fynde so many worldly prestis þat kunnen no goode & non wolen lerne, ne teche oþere men to lyue wel<sup>2</sup> ne lyue wel<sup>2</sup> hem self. but þus þei maken hem maistris & lordis of goode preieris & sillen hem to men þat hem likiþ for money, & taken not reward to partynge of god, hou he is chief lord & grauntiþ part of good preieris to euery goode man þat is in grace as moche as is riȝtful.

They claim falsely  
to be able to re-  
strict and assign  
the benefit of  
their prayers to  
those who pay  
for them.

God gives to  
every good man  
a share in all good  
prayers.

### Capitulum 21<sup>m</sup>.

Wykede prestis also disceyuen cristene men in hope; for þei techen þat men schullen haue more þank of god to do here almes to riche freris & false pardoners & to make grete waste housynge, þanne helpe here pore neiȝeboris in cloþynge & housynge & out of dette & prison, & parische chirchis

Teach men to  
give alms to friars  
and pardoners  
instead of to the  
poor;

<sup>1</sup> myspenden X.

<sup>2</sup> omitted X.

vplond; & certis þis is anticristis techynge, for men ernen & geten moche wraþþe of god in doynge syche nouelries for worldly name & ignoraunce, þe whiche nouelries god biddiþ not, & in leuyngeworkis of mercy where god comaundiþ hem to be don, for bi þis techynge þei wenen þat it is almes that is, to mis- spend their goods to myspenden<sup>1</sup> here goodis & leuen goddis comaundement vndo.

### Capitulum 22<sup>m</sup>.

They encourage war by offering pardons, etc., Also þei disceyuen cristene men in charite; for þei conforten hem to fitte aȝenst cristene men in false werris for pride & coueitise bi sikernesse of here veyn preieris þat ben cursed of god; & hereto þei wolen crie ora *pro nobis* abouten þe grete stretis þat god distroie here cristene breþeren & ȝeue hem schort lif, euyl sped & wicked ende; & here-bi þei axen here owen dampnacion, as god seiþ in þe pater noster & oþere placis of þe gospel. it were betre to crie faste þat þe peple amendid here lif, & þat god helpe vs & oure enemys aȝenst þe fend & make us frendis in crist.

and by crying  
*Ora pro nobis*  
about the street.

It would be better  
to pray for recon-  
ciliation.

### Capitulum 23<sup>m</sup>.

They encourage rich men to support mass priests instead of supporting children at school. ȝit þes worldly prestis disceyuen riche men in here almes; for þei wolen not stire riche men to fynde pore children able of witt & lyuyngework to scole for to lerne, but to fynde proude prestis at hom to crie faste in þe chirche in sixtē of \*þe world, & helpe<sup>2</sup> to serue hem at þe mete & oþere worldly offices; & ȝit þei stiren hem to fynde summe prestis to lawe, þat maken false dyuorsis & holden false causes & dispisen oþere symple prestis þat lyuen in mekenesse & deuocion & medlen not of syche pledynge, but þei stiren not riche men to fynde a good deuout prest able of witt & wille to lerne holy writt & preche it freely to þe peple to saue here soulis; & þis makiþ moche þat holy writt is not knowen ne kept, ne tauȝt trewely & frely as it schulde be.

They get support also for law students, who do mischief,

but do not lead men to support good preachers.

<sup>1</sup> myspendynge X.

<sup>2</sup> hope X.

*Capitulum 24<sup>m</sup>.*

Also þei maken riche men & tirauntis to holde werre  
 ajenst god after here deþ day; for whanne þes riche  
 marchauntis & tirauntis dien & mowen no lengere meyntene  
 synne in þis world bi here owen persone, þan þei fynden many  
 worldly & synful prestis, bi goodis falsly geten þat schulden  
 be restorid to pore men, not to lerne & teche holy writt as  
 crist comaundij but dwelle at o place & cris on hey wiþ newe  
 song þat lettij deuocion & þe sentence to be vnderstonden; &  
 þes worldly prestis letten most opore prestis þat lyuen wel &  
 techen wel, last here synne be aspied & here wynnynge &  
 bodily ayse ceese.

They make rich  
 men found chan-  
 tries,

where they keep  
 up useless chant-  
 ing.

*Capitulum 25<sup>m</sup>.*

Also þei disceyuen þe peple to holde forþ here olde cursed  
 lif & synne; for þei seyn þat þei wolen preie for hem, & þei  
 schullen ben excused to-fore god for þe almes þat þei don in  
 fyndynge hem to seie masse & matynes & euensong & placebo  
 & dirige; & herbi þe peple is bolder to dwelle in synne. but  
 þes prestis schulden witnessen opynly þat alle þe seyntis in  
 heuene may not brynge a man to heuene wiþ-uten his owen  
 goode lif, kepynge þe hestis of God, & endynge in charite.

They lead men to  
 trust in masses,  
 etc., instead of  
 leading a good  
 life.

All the saints  
 cannot bring a  
 bad man to  
 heaven.

*Capitulum 26<sup>m</sup>.*

Also þes euele prestis pursuen crist in his membris & nailen  
 hym on þe croos of lesynges & vnkyndenesse; for þei  
 slaundren cristis seruauntis wiþ lesynges & haten hem, &  
 helpe to lette hem fro trewe prechyng bi suspendynge,  
 symonyng<sup>1</sup> & cursyng & mannus iurdiccioun, & seyn þat it  
 was god world be for þat prestis precheden & siþ haþ ben  
 discencion & werris & pestilencis; & alle þis is to lette goddis  
 word þat it be not knowen & kept & opynly tauht. & þei  
 slaundren goddis lawe wiþ many errouris & maken it  
 vnsawory to worldly men, for as moche as þei wolden þat it

They persecute  
 Christ's servants  
 and try to stop  
 preaching.

They alander  
 God's law.

<sup>1</sup> somenyng AA.

were not knowe[n] lesse<sup>1</sup> þei were lettid of here<sup>2</sup> coueitise & bodily welfaire & aise, & it is al on to pursue þus cristis seruauantis & to pursue crist, as he seij in þe gospel, & to lie þus on his lawe & to lien on him self as ion crisostom & austyn & ambrose witnessen.

### Capitulum 27<sup>m</sup>.

Also þei dreden more synful men & in cas fendis of helle þan almyȝtty god in trinyte; for þou; god comaundid hem to preche<sup>3</sup> goddis lawe in word & ensauple, & fauoure trewe men & helpe hem & preche þe gospel, þis doren þei not done ne<sup>4</sup> helpe opere þer-to for drede of a wrongful maundement \*of a bischop or his officeris; for þanne<sup>5</sup> þei schulden be somoned & traueiled & dispised & suspendid of here masse as þei dreden, and alle þis were medful ȝif þei wolden take it paciently. but þei dreden ouere litel þe grete peyne of helle to whiche god schal sende hem for defaute of charite &<sup>6</sup> doynge his wille bifore alle opere þingis; & þus þei dreden more þe bischopis lettre þan þe gospel of crist, & so þe bischop more þan oure lord god almyȝtty, & þis is foule blasphemye.

\*[p. 144 MS.]  
Obey the bishops  
rather than God

for fear of the  
courts.

### Capitulum 28<sup>m</sup>.

ȝit þei leuen seruyce of god vndon for a cursed sathanas & anticrist biddiþ hem ceesse; for whanne þe bischop or his mynysters somonen hem & þei comen not but ben betre occupied to serue god in deuocion & clenness of lif & to helpe cristene soulis to heuene, a noon þei schullen be suspendid fro seyng of masse & prechyng of þe gospel; & þus þei leuen goddis seruyce & comaundementis vndon for þe comaundement of anticrist & sathanas; & þus bischopis officeris & curatis & prestis fallen oute of bileue & renne in-to blasphemye & heresie & drawen þe comyn peple after hem in-to errour.

They leave God's  
work undone,

because the  
bishop suspends  
them.

<sup>1</sup> last AA.

<sup>2</sup> teche AA.

<sup>3</sup> here not in X. through the margin being cut away.

<sup>4</sup> omitted X.

<sup>5</sup> omitted X.

<sup>6</sup> in AA.

*Capitulum 29<sup>m</sup>.*

But goode *prestis*, þat lyuen wel in clenness in þouȝt <sup>Nobleness of priest's office.</sup>  
 & <sup>1</sup> speche & <sup>1</sup> dede & good ensaunple to þe peple, & techen  
 goddis lawe vp here kunnyng, & *traueile* fast nyȝt & day to  
 lerne betre & teche opynly & lastyngly, ben verrey *prophetis*  
 of god & holy *aungelis* of god & gostly liȝt of þe world, as  
 god seyþ bi his *prophetis* & ihū crist in þe gospel, & seyntis  
 declaren it wel bi auctorite & reson. ȝe *prestis* þenke on þis <sup>Exhortation to priests</sup>  
 noble office & worþi, & doþ it wilfully vpon þoure kunnyng  
 & power. þenke,<sup>2</sup> ȝe lordis & myȝtly men þat fynden *prestis*, and lords,  
 hou dredeful it is to meyntene worldly *prestis* in here lustis,  
 þat neiþer kunnen goode ne wolen lerne ne lyuen holiliche  
 in þis noble ordre. for ȝe may liȝtly amende hem wiþ-oute <sup>who can amend evil.</sup>  
 coste or *traueile*, tellynge hem þat ȝe wolen not fynde hem  
 but ȝif þei don here besynesse to lyue wel & lerne & *preche*  
 þe gospel, & certis þan þei wolden don it in dede. A, þenke  
 ȝe, grete men, þat þis were a þousand fold betre þan to  
 conquare al þe world, & her-by schulde be no more cost to  
 þou ne *traueile* ne deise, but worschiþe to god & endeles good  
 to þowre<sup>3</sup> self, to *prestis* & to alle cristendom. god for his  
 endeles *mercy* & charite brynge þis holy ende. Amen.

<sup>1</sup> in AA.<sup>2</sup> þenke X.<sup>3</sup> þow AA.

## IX.

## THREE THINGS DESTROY THIS WORLD.

THERE is nothing in this tract which can give us any certainty as to authorship or date. It should be noticed that the false confessors are friars; and that the lawyers, who are charged with gross hypocrisy, are priests.

The complaints of packing and bribing juries are worth notice.

Copied from the Corpus MS. X. and collated with the Dublin MS. AA.

## SUMMARY.

False confessors are the chief cause of sin, since they excuse sins on condition of gifts to religious houses. They waste money in luxurious living, and get dispensation from their rule	p. 181
Wicked lawyers encourage quarrels, suborn perjury, pack juries, oppress the poor. They pretend to be religious	182
Ecclesiastical lawyers worst of all. They uphold the Civil Law above God's Law. They make divorces, and raise quarrels between man and wife	184
False merchants cheat, and teach their apprentices and servants to cheat. They are usurers	185
False confessors worst of all, since they encourage the rest	186

Dre þingis distroien þis world, false confessoures, false  
men of lawe, & false marchauntis.

\*False confessouris ben cause of alle þe synne þat regneþ  
among clerkis, among lordis, amonge comunis; for þei taken  
þe charge to hele alle men of synne, & don not here power  
þer-to, but meyntenen & conforten hem þer-inne for worldly  
wynnynge, frendshipe & worschipe. for þei schulden teche  
hem here grete synnes & peynes for hem, & but þif men  
wolden leue here synnes & taken goddis word in reuerence,  
þei schulden leue here companye, & go to opere to whom þei  
myȝten profite more, as crist tauȝte his apostlis. & þat is  
worse, þei seyn<sup>1</sup> þat þei wolen answeere for men at domes day  
for to excuse hem þif þei wolen ȝefe hem or here hous to make  
gaye wyndowis or veyn housynge & nedles moche gold or  
siluer; & so þat þat schulde be delid among most nedy men  
bi comaundement of god þei wasten in veyn & nedles houses,  
& þat þing þat schulde be restorid men, for it was taken of  
hem bi extorsion & wronge menys, þei taken to himself to  
maken festis to riche men. <sup>2</sup>lordis þei resceyuen to here  
housynge, & letten osteleris of here offices & wynnynge, &  
maken iubilees þat we reden not<sup>3</sup> of, of<sup>4</sup> kyngis ne emperouris,  
to be þanne excused of risynge at mydnyȝt & opere deuociouns  
in whiche as þei seyn stondiȝ perfeccion of here ordre. &  
þus whanne þei schulden be most perfit þei leuen here  
perfeccion & maken veyn cost & gret,<sup>5</sup> not to \*fede pore men  
but lordis þat han no nede, to forsake þat þat sumtyme was  
perfeccion. & þif þe potestatis of here ordre dispinsen wiȝ  
hem lawefully, þan þei maken hem more perfit in lif þan þei  
weren bifore, for ellis þei don hem harm in soule & peieren  
hem to godward, þat no creature may lesefully<sup>6</sup> do; þan it  
were more perfeccion to leue here singuler obedience &  
obseruauncis, as þei don now in most perfeccion, & ellis þei

[p. 160 MS.]  
False confessors  
confirm men in  
their sins.

Luke x. 10.

They will excuse  
any sins, if men  
will make gifts  
to their houses.

Waste the alms  
that should go to  
the poor,

Seek excuses to  
escape their rule.

[p. 161 MS.]

Dispensations  
from rule are  
profitable.

Then it would be  
better to leave  
the rule.

<sup>1</sup> AA inserts for þei sei.

<sup>4</sup> omitted X.

<sup>2</sup> X inserts as.

<sup>5</sup> omitted X.

<sup>3</sup> omitted X.

<sup>6</sup> lefffully AA.

ben cursed alle þat approuen siche iubilees & dispensacions. And siþ þis dispensacion is wel don as þei seyn, þan god approueþ it for certeyn cause, but *opere* cause is þer noone but þat þis man schal betere serue god wiþ-uten þes obseruaunces þan to holden hem forþ; þanne what man frere or munk schal betere serue god wiþ-uten siche obseruauncis of freris or munkis þan wiþ hem, god approueþ þat þat frere or monk leue here obseruauncis & turne to fredom of cristis gospel. But it semeþ whanne lordis heren<sup>1</sup> a false confessour þei hiren an anticrist to leden hem to helle. And þus false confessouris ben þe fendis norisses<sup>2</sup> to norisse mennus soulis in synne & to brynge hem to sathanas; & þus in a maner þei sillen soulis to sathanas for a litel stynkyng drit or wombe ioie or pride & worldly worschipe, & þus þei ben traitouris to god almyȝtty, to clerkis, lordis & comeneris, & dampnen hem self.

Also false men of lawe disceyuen moche þis world, for þei tellen not sadly & trewely hou þe lawe stondiþ. But norischen pledyng & debate among men for to haue a veyn name & wynnen hem a litil worldly stynkyng muk wiþ goddis curs, & wittingly meynutenen<sup>3</sup> þe fals partie bi cauelacions, & forbarien<sup>4</sup> pore men of riȝt, þat þou; a pore man han neuere so muche<sup>5</sup> riȝt ȝit þei wole make many doseyns to forsweren hem on þe book to gete hem self þank or wynnynge. but þes ben false procuratouris of sathanas to dryue mennus soulis to helle; for ȝif þer be a trewe man in a contre he schal not come on<sup>6</sup> his queste ȝif he may deuoyde hym, & ȝif he seie þe soþe he schal haue his<sup>7</sup> hate, sclaudryng, loos of his catel or of his lif in þis<sup>8</sup> world; & þes laweieris þanken & flateryn & meynutenen false men & helpen hem<sup>9</sup> what þei may; & þus þei ben special procurators & false knyȝttis or champions of þe deuyl to meynutenen falsenesse, & distroien treuþe & knyȝttis of treuþe, equyte & charite; & herby þei geten<sup>10</sup> hem gold<sup>10</sup> & purchasen rentis & londis of lordis &

The only cause for altering a rule is that a man may serve God better.

False confessors the devil's nurses.

Wicked lawyers

encourage quarrels,

suborn perjury,

pack and intimidate juries,

get the land into their hands and ruin the real heirs.

<sup>1</sup> hiren AA.

<sup>2</sup> norisses, a later hand in X.

<sup>3</sup> in mayntenens AA.

<sup>4</sup> forbarren AA. <sup>5</sup> opyn AA.

<sup>6</sup> to AA.

<sup>7</sup> is X.

<sup>8</sup> AA inserts wreccohid.

<sup>9</sup> omitted X.

<sup>10-10</sup> omitted X.



distroien verrey heieris, & þis distroieþ moche<sup>1</sup> oure lond.  
 for hou schulde riȝt be among suche men, þat þis day han but Their riches come too fast to be honest.  
 here penye & anon purchasen rentis & londis to be peris wiþ  
 knyttis or barons. Certis falsnesse auanseeþ hem, & þerfore þei  
 maken sacrifice to þe fend. lord, hou schal god here hem in  
 here moste nede, siþ þei wolen not here a pore man, haue \*he [p. 182 MS.] They will not hear the poor.  
 neuere so grete riȝt. certis siþ men schullen be dampnyd for  
 defaute of werkis of mercy, moche more þei þat wolen not Will be damned for their oppressions.  
 opene here mouþ to speke o word for treuþe & goddis loue;  
 but moche more schullen þei be dampnyd for extorcions &  
 false plees þat þei meyntenen wittingly, or whanne þei owe  
 to witte it, aȝenst trewe partie; but most þei schullen be depe  
 dampnyd for here grete ypocrisie, for þei maken it so holy Their pretences of religion.  
 boþe in word & signes, as knockyng on here brest, knelynge  
 & seiynge of matynes & euensong, & herynge of massis, &  
 many oþere deuocions to coloure here falsnesse, þat symple  
 men supposen no more riȝtwisnesse in ony man þat leueth in  
 herþe. but ȝit iurouris in questis wolen forsweren hem Jarons often forswear themselves for a dinner and a noble,  
 wittingly for here dyner & a noble, & þat so custumablice þat  
 þou; a man haue neuere so opyn riȝt to a lordischepe anemptis  
 mannys lawe & also goddis, þat many questis wolen wittingly  
 swere þat it is not his for a litel money; & so þei sillen crist  
 þat is treuþe, as iudas dide, for a litel money, & þei ben so the more that they get absolution so easily.  
 esely assoiled, but falsly of false confessouris for a litel part  
 here wicked catel, þat þei maken no conscience for þis cursed  
 periurie but ben endurid or hardid þer-inne as fendis of helle.  
 & þus lordis & oþere men ben nedid for þis falsnesse to holden Lords are obliged to keep them in pay.  
 hem at fees & oþere grete costis, for ellis wiþ here wiles &  
 falsnesse þei wolen dryue lordis & gentil men out of here housis,  
 heritage & alle here goodis; & bi þis falsnesse a fewe pore  
 wrecchis myȝten<sup>2</sup> conqueren in-to here owene hondis<sup>3</sup> in  
 schort tyme almost al þe lordischepe þat may be sold on ony<sup>4</sup>  
 resonable manere. & þou; it be bouȝt opynly aȝenst þe lawe, They make it as costly to defend one's own property as to buy a new one.  
 ȝit bi cauellacions þes lawieris holden it forþ, þat þe riȝtful  
 heir may as wel bien a straunge<sup>5</sup> lordischepe as geten his

<sup>1</sup> AA inserts of. <sup>2</sup> omitted X. <sup>3</sup> housis AA. <sup>4</sup> only X. <sup>5</sup> stronge X.

owene. ¶ Also falsse laweieris maken lordis & oþere men to meynntenen false causis & do wrongis to here neiȝeboris, whanne þe lordis wenen þat it is soþ, & so priuely maken lordis<sup>1</sup> dampnable for here wrong meyntenynge.

Ecclisastical  
lawyers the worst  
of any.

But of laweiris of þe consistorie or chapitris is more synne & ypocrisie to schewe. for þei tarien men in here courtis þouȝ þe riȝt neuere so pleyn, þat men ben ful [weary] of here peyneful lif so þei ben hurlid abouten; for ȝif a trewe man be falsly sclaunderide & come among hem it is liȝttere to make a fyn for moche money þan to purge hym, be it neuere so opyn knownen; for ellis he schal be hurlid fro contre to contre, fro day to day, þat he schal be cotumax & cursed, & þanne stonde at here wille, or ellis for traueile & cost be ful [weary] of his lif. ¶ And þouȝ a man be neuere so cursed, ȝif he wole paie an

They keep causes  
so long that it is  
always cheapest  
to pay a fine,  
right or wrong.

\*[p. 163 MS.]  
Sin-rents.

annuel rente to þes lawieris & to \*þe cursed court or to bischopis almes, he schal baȝe hym in his synne as long as he wole þus paie; & ȝif þere be ony good bischop þat wole chace þe fendis of lecherie or vsurie & sicke moo, anon coueitous laweieris wiȝ here gnackis & iapis, delaies, excusacions & fals appelis, letten þe bischop to ponysche þis synne. & cursednesse of þis synne regneȝ forȝ bi a ȝeer, hauynge þe apel in þe heiȝere court, & sumtyme as long as þis cursed man lyueȝ; & also whanne a trewe prest wolde bi goode conscience & bi

Even if a bishop  
would do his  
duty, the lawyers  
stop him.

They set up the  
civil law against  
the gospel.

forme of þe gospel distroie synne, þan lawieris maken procees bi sotilte & cauyllacions of lawe cyuyle, þat is moche heȝene mennus lawe, & not accepten the forme of þe gospel, as ȝif þe gospel were not so good as paynymes lawe. & þus þei seyn þe gospel is not ynow; to reule holy chirche by, but synful mennus lawis ful of errour ben more nedful þan þe gospel þer-to. & þus þei seyn in dede þat crist was a fool & out of charite; for siȝ he tauȝte not þe beste lawe for to reule cristene mennys soulis bi, as þei seyn, he was out of charite; for he myȝtte & coude ȝeue þe beste, & siȝ he demyd þat þe gospel was þe beste, & it is not þe beste as þei seyn,

<sup>1</sup> Some pages are wanting here in AA. containing all the rest of the tract except six lines at the end.

þan þei seyn þat crist was a fool. & so þei putten þe gospel bihynde & dispisen it & magnyfien paynymes lawes & oþere synful mennys lawes for þe beste, & seyn in dede þat paynymes & oþere synful men, þat in caas be dampnyd deuellis, weren wisere & betre þan ihū crist, siþ þei ȝeuen betre lawes & more nedful for holy chirche þan euere dide ihū crist; & herefore þei reulyn clerkis bi þes worldly wronge lawis, & maken oure clerkis worldly & to forsake holy writt, for it dampneþ pride & coueitise clerkis & techen mekenesse & to flee coueitise & oþere synnes. But paynymes lawe & worldly clerkis lawe meyntene pride, coueitise, extorcions & oþere synnes, & þerfore þei ben studied of worldly clerkis, & goddis owene wordis ben dispised. ¶ Also þei maken men to forsweren hem & norischen hem þerinne, & maken men to charge more þe peny þan þe trewe conscience & maundementis of god, & þer-to maken dyuors bi false witness & oþere cautelis, & so reisen debatis & enemytes bitwene weddid men & here wiwes bi many priue menys of anticrist. & ȝit þe fend techen hem to make orible peynes of here owene wille for smale synnys, to make men for fere to paye moche money to hem; & riche men & myȝtti ben not ponynschid bi here lawis, be here synne neuere so opyn, but pore men ben ponynschid, ȝe þou; þei ben trewe & clene, but ȝif þei paien to anticrist aftir his wille. & þus \*þes courtis ben courtis of  
Make divorces by false witness.  
Cause quarrels between men and their wives.

¶ Also false marchauntis bryngen vp & susteynen moche synne to distroie þe world; for þei lyuen comynly bi falsnesse as bi false swerynge, false mesure & false weitis, & techen þis falsnesse to ȝonge prentis, & preisen hym most þat foulest raymen alle þe membris of crist falsly, & most sotilly can bigilen þe peple, & ȝif ony seruaunt of here wole do treuþe & drede synne he is holden but a fool & vnþriftly & schal neuere be man; & ȝit þes false marchauntis bien gret chep & killen out of cours dere & bringen fro heþene men, & oþere  
False merchants cheat, and teach their apprentices and servants to cheat and lie,

encourage  
luxury,

are usurers,

lead evil lives.

The false con-  
fessours are the  
worst of all;

for they let these  
men live in their  
sins if they will  
endow religious  
houses.

cursed men þat han name of cristene men, many newe gises of pride & worldly vanyte, & magnyfien hem aboue þe cloudis; where-fore þe lordis & oþere men ben drawen fro þinkyng of god & heuenely þingis, & setten here wittis & likyngis in þes newe vanytees & fantom of worldly glorie. & þe moste of here wynnyng stondiþ in fals vsure, so moche þat þei han enuennymed almost alle clerkis, alle lordis, & alle oþere men wiþ þis cursed vsure; summe bi doynge of vsure, summe bi consentynge þer-to & for meynntenynge þer-of, & so þei bringen cursyngis to alle men comynly of oure lond. & ȝit þei lyuen in glotonye, dronkenesse & lecherie as hoggis, & in coueitise, ydelnesse, pride, enuye & wraþþe as fendis; & þis cursed lif þei techen in word & dede to oþere pore men as sathanas procuratouris & cursed heretikis. but ȝit false confessouris þat leden hem & reulen hem in þis cursed lif, & wolen not tellen hem þe soþe for drede of lesynge of here frendschipe & worldly wynnyng but conforten hem in þis synful lif & vndertaken for here synnes at domes day, don most cursed synne of alle. for þei techen þes foolis to make gret cost of wast houses of freris or of oþere veyn religion, or to holde proude & worldly prestis, or to founde a college of worldly clerkis or religious aȝenat goddis lawe, & þer-bi to be sauȝd þou; þei dwellen stille in here synne & maken no restitution to men þat þei han disceyued, & þou; þei don not here almes to pore men & nedy þat ben bedered & mowe not helpe hem self, but suffren hem to perisehe for myschief. & þus lordis & riche men hiren false confessouris wiþ grete spensis þat leden hem faste to helle; & þe comune peple is constreyned bi anticristis lawis to meyntene wiþ tipis & offryngis false curatis & confessouris, þat disceyuen hem in techynge of goddis lawe & norischen hem in synne & so leden hem to helle. And þus bi þes men<sup>1</sup> falsnesse regneþ, & treuþe & vertuous lif ben distroied, & so þes þre fals men distroien þis world boþe in soule & in<sup>2</sup> worldly goodis.

<sup>1</sup> many X.

<sup>2</sup> omitted X.

## X.

## OF FEIGNED CONTEMPLATIVE LIFE.

I THINK this is an early work of Wyclif's. It is certainly higher in tone and better in style than many in this volume. Especially to be noticed is the passage on p. 193, where the author, after inveighing against the heavy burden of ritual ordinances laid upon priests, returns upon himself with the warning that men must not abuse the freedom to which he exhorts them by making it an excuse for sloth, for that is the devil's snare. So, too, the complaint (p. 194) that priests lead a lower life than their conscience dictates, for fear of hurting the sick conscience of their brethren, is a touch finer than is common in these polemical papers. How often may Wyclif's impetuous exhortations to revolt have been parried by such considerations as these?

The scribe who wrote the Corpus MS. (X.) made a curious blunder with this tract, as has been pointed out by Mr. Arnold, S. E. W. III. 507. Owing most likely to the displacement of some leaves in the MS. from which he copied, he transferred the last part of this tract to the end of "A Petition to the King and Parliament," while bringing the last part of the Petition to the end of this. As is often the case with him, he passed over the junction in happy unconsciousness that he was writing nonsense.

Copied from the Corpus MS. X. and collated with the Dublin MS. AA.

## SUMMARY.

Contemplation (so called) is made an excuse for not preaching	.....	p. 188
Contemplation to come in heaven after good life here	.....	189
The devil prevents men from preaching by diverting their attention to singing in a tricky and artificial way	.....	191
In a large choir a few sing and the rest stand dumb	.....	192
The Ordinal of Salisbury interferes with preaching, for it burdens men with so many rites that they have no time for good works	.....	192
Men who know better waste their time on services for fear of giving offence	.....	194
Worldly business hinders preaching	.....	194
Christ and his Apostles preached and did not administer alms	.....	196

Of feyned contemplatif lif, of song, of þe ordynal of  
salisbury, & of bodely almes & worldly bysynesse  
of prestis; hou bi þes foure þe fend lettij hem fro  
prechyng of þe gospel.

\*[p. 165 MS.]  
Contemplative  
life made a plea  
for not preaching.

\*First whanne trewe men techen bi goddis lawe wit & reson  
þat eche prest owijþ to do his myȝt, his<sup>1</sup> wit & his wille to  
preche cristis gospel, þe fend<sup>2</sup> blyndijþ ypocritis to excuse  
hem by feyned contemplatif lif, & to seie þat siȝ it is þe beste  
& þei may not do boþe to-gidre, þei ben nedid for charite of  
god to leue þe prechyng of þe gospel & lyuen in contempla-  
cion. See nowe þe ypocrisie of þis false seiynge; crist tauȝt &  
dide þe beste lif for prestis, as oure feiȝ techijþ, siȝ he was god &

Christ bid his  
disciples preach.  
Luc ix. & x.  
Mark xvi. [15.]

myȝte not erre; but crist preched þe gospel & charged alle his  
apostlis & disciplis to goo & preche þe gospel to alle men: þan  
it is þe beste lif for prestis in þis world to preche<sup>3</sup> & teche<sup>4</sup>

Isaiah lviil. [1.]  
Ezekiel liii. 17 and  
xxxiii. 7.

þe gospel. ¶ Also god in þe olde lawe techijþ þat þe office of a  
prophete is to schewe to þe peple here foule synnys; but eche  
prest is a prophete bi his ordre, as gregory seyþ vpon þe  
gospellis, þanne it is þe office of eche prest to preche & telle  
þe synnys of þe peple, & in þis manere schal eche prest be an  
aungel of god as holy writt seiþ. ¶ Also Crist & ion baptist

Mal. ii. [7].  
Examples of  
Christ and John  
Baptist.  
Mat. iii. & iv. & v.

leften desert & precheden þe gospel to here deȝ þerfore, & þis  
was most charite, for ellis þei weren out of charite or peierid  
in charite, þat myȝte not be in hem boþe, siȝ þe ton was god,  
& no man after crist was holyere þan baptist & he synned not  
for þis prechyng. ¶ Also þe holy prophete Jeromye halwid in  
his moder wombe myȝtte not be excused fro prechyng bi his  
contemplacion, but chargid of god to preche þe synnes of þe  
peple & suffre hard<sup>4</sup> payne þerfore, & so weren alle þe pro-  
phetis of god. ¶ A lord, siȝ crist and ion baptist & alle þe  
prophetis of god weren nedid bi charite to come out of desert

Jer. i. [5.]

<sup>1</sup> and AA.

<sup>2</sup> fendis X.

<sup>3</sup> omitted X.

<sup>4</sup> omitted X.

to preche to þe peple & leue here solitarie<sup>1</sup> preiere, hou dore we fonnyd heretikys seie þat it is betre to be stille & preie oure owen fonnyd ordynaunce þan to preche cristis gospel? Lord, what cursed spirit of lesyngis stiriþ prestis to close hem in stonys or wallis for al here lif, siþ crist comaundiþ to alle his apostlis & prestis to goo in-to alle þe world & preche þe gospel. certis þei ben opyn foolis & don pleylny aenst cristis gospel &, jif þei meyntenen þis errour, þei ben cursed of god<sup>2</sup> & ben perilous ypocritis & heretikis also; & aiþ men ben holden heretikis þat done aenst þe popis lawe,<sup>3</sup> & þe beste part of þe popis lawe<sup>4</sup> seiþ pleylny þat eche þat comeþ to presthod takiþ þe office of a bedele or criere to goo bifore domesday<sup>\*</sup> to crie to þe peple here synnes & vengauce of god,

The Pope's law says the priest is a crier.

\*[p. 166 MS.]

whi ben not þo prestis heretikis þat leuen to preche cristis gospel, & compelle oþere treue men to leue prechyng of þe gospel, siþ þis lawe is seynt gregoryes lawe, groundid opynly in goddis lawe & reson & charite, & oþere lawes of þe peple ben contrarie to holy writt & reson & charite for to meyntene pride & coueitise of anticristis worldly clerkis. but ypocritis allegen þe gospel, þat magdeleyne chees to hereself þe beste part whanne she saat bisiden cristis feet & herde his word; soþ<sup>4</sup> it is þat þis meke sittynge & deuout herynge of cristis wordis was best to magdeleyne, for sche hadde not office of prechyng as prestis han, siþ sche was a womman þat hadde not auctorite of goddis lawe to teche & preche opynly. but what is þis dede to prestis þat han expresse þe comaunderment of god & men to preche þe gospel? where þei wolen alle be wommen in ydelnesse, & suen not ihū crist in lif & prechyng of þe gospel þat he comaundiþ hym self boþe in þo olde lawe and newe. ¶ Also þis peisible<sup>5</sup> herynge of cristis word & brennyng loue þat magdeleyne hadde was þe beste part, for it schal be ende in heuene of good lif in þis world; but in þis world<sup>6</sup> þe beste lif for prestis is holy lif in kepyng of goddis hestis & trewe prechyng of þe gospel, as crist dide &

Gregory.

Mary Magdalen not to be taken as a model, since she was a woman and not a priest.

Contemplative life to come in heaven.

<sup>1</sup> solarie X.

<sup>2</sup> omitted X.

<sup>2,3</sup> omitted X.

<sup>4</sup> seiþ AA.

<sup>5</sup> possible X.

<sup>6</sup> lif X.

These hypocrites  
take dreaming for  
contemplation.

Luke xxi. 36.

1 Thess. v. 17.

"Pray without  
ceasing." is not  
said of spoken  
prayer.

Austyn.

Prov. xxviii. 9.

Possessioners

\*[p. 167 MS.]

ought to learn  
what contempla-  
tive life is.

chargid alle his prestis to do <sup>1</sup>þe same<sup>1</sup>; & þes ypocritis wenen þat here dremys & fantasies of hem-self ben contem-  
placion, & þat prechyng of þe gospel be actif lif, & so þei menen þat crist tok þe worse lif for þis world, & nedid alle prestis to leue þe betre & take the worse lif; & þus þes fonnyd ypocritis putten error in ihū crist. But who ben more heretikis? ¶ Also þes blynde ypocritis alleggen þat crist biddiþ vs preie euermore, & poul biddiþ þat we preie wiþ-oute lettynge, & þan we prestis may not preche as þei feynen falsly. but here þes ypocritis schullen wite þat crist & poul vnderstonden of preiere of holy lif, þat eche man doþ as longe as he dwelliþ in charite; & not of babelynge of lippis þat no man may euere do wiþ-uten cessynge, for ellis no man in þis world myȝte fulfille þe comaundement of crist; & þis techiþ austyn & oþere seyntis. & siþ men þat fulfillen not goddis lawe & ben out of charite ben not acceptid in here preiynge of lippis, for here preiere in lippis is abhomyneable, as holy writt seiþ bi salomon, þes prestis þat prechen not þe gospel as crist biddiþ ben not able to preie god<sup>2</sup> for mercy, but disceyuen hemself & þe peple & dispisen god & stiren hym to wrappe & vengauce, as austyn & gregory & oþere seyntis techen; & principalȝ þes ypocritis þat han rentes & worldly lordischipes & parische chirchis approprid to hem, aȝenst holy writt boþe <sup>3</sup>old & newe by symonye & lesyngis on<sup>3</sup> crist & his apostelis for stynkyng gronyngys & a-bite of holynesse & for<sup>4</sup> distroyng of goddis ordynauce & for singuler profession maade to foolis & in cas to fendis of helle. þes foolis schullen lerne what is actif lif & contemplatif bi goddis lawe, & þanne þei myȝten wite þat þei han neiþer þe ton ne þe toiþer, siþ þei chargen more veyn statutis of<sup>5</sup> synful men, & in cas of<sup>6</sup> deuelys, þan þei chargen þe heste of god & werkis of mercy & poyntis of charite. & þe fende blyndiþ hem so moche þat þei seyn in-dede þat þei moten

<sup>1</sup> omitted X.

<sup>4</sup> fro X.

<sup>2</sup> omitted X.

<sup>5</sup> & X.

<sup>3</sup> & X.

<sup>6</sup> omitted X.



neuere preie to plesynge<sup>1</sup> of god, siþ þei vnablen hem self to do þe office of prestis bi goddis lawe & purposen to ende in here feyned deuocion þat is blasphemye to god.

¶ Also bi song þe fend lettith men to studie & preche þe gospel; Singing for siþ mannys wittis ben of certeyn mesure & myȝt, þe more þat þei ben occupied aboute siche mannus song þe lesse moten þei be sette aboute goddis lawe; for þis stirith men to pride & iolite hinders men from attending to God's law. & lecherie & opere synnys, & so vnableþ hem many gatis to vnderstonde & kepe holy writt þat techeþ mekenesse, mornynge for oure synnys & opere mennus, & stable lif & charite. & God orders not such song. þit god in all þe lawe of grace chargith not siche song but deuocion in herte, trewe techynge & holy spekyng in tonge, & goode werkis & holy lastynge in charite & mekenesse; but mannus foly & pride stieþ vp euere more & more in þis veyn nouelrie. First men ordeyned songe of mornynge whanne þei weren in prison, for techynge of þe gospel, as ambrose &<sup>2</sup> men seyn, to Ambrose. putte away ydelnesse & to be not vnoccupied in goode manere for þe tyme; & þat songe & oure<sup>3</sup> acordith not, for oure stirith to iolite & pride, & here stirith to mornynge & to dwelle lenger in wordis of goddis lawe. þan were matynys & masse & euen song, placebo & dirige & comendacion & matynes of oure lady ordeyned of synful men, to be songen wiþ heiȝe crynge Gradual growth of formal services. to lette men fro þe sentence & vnderstondynge of þat þat was þus songen, & to maken men wery & vndisposid to studie goddis lawe for akyng of hedis: & of<sup>4</sup> schort tyme þanne Singing hinders understanding of the words, and gives head-aches. weren<sup>5</sup> more veyn iapis founden; deschaunt, countre note & orgon & smale brekyng, þat stirith veyn men to daunsynge more þan to<sup>6</sup> mornynge, & here-fore ben many proude & lecherous lorelis founden & dowid wiþ temporal & worldly lordischipis & gret cost. but þes foolis schulden drede þe scharpe wordis of austyn, þat seiþ: as oft as þe song likith me Austyn. more þan doþ þe sentence þat is songen, so oft I confesse þat I synne greuously. ¶ And þif þes knackeris excusen hem bi song in þe olde lawe; seiþ þat crist, þat best kepte þe olde lawe as it schulde<sup>\*</sup> be afftirward, tauȝt not ne chargid vs wiþ<sup>\*</sup> [p. 168 MS.]

<sup>1</sup> preisyng X.    <sup>2</sup> as AA.    <sup>3</sup> opere X.    <sup>4</sup> omitted AA.    <sup>5</sup> omitted X.    <sup>6</sup> omitted X.

sich bodely song ne ony of his apostlis, but wij deuocion in herte & holy lif & trewe prechyng, & þat is ynowþ; & þe beste. but who schulde þanne charge vs wij more ouere þe fredom and liȝtnesse of cristis lawe? & ȝif þei seyn þat

The angels sing in heaven.

angelis heryen god bi song in heuene; seie þat we kunnen not þat song, but þei ben in ful victorie of here enemys & we ben in perilous bataile,<sup>1</sup> & in þe valeye of wepyng & mornyng; & oure song lettij vs fro betre occupacion & stirij vs to many grete synnes & to forȝete vs self. but oure fleschly peple haþ more lykyng in here bodely eris in sich knackyng & taterynge þan in heryng of goddis lawe, & spekyng of þe blisse of heuene, for þei wolen hire proude prestis & opore lecherous lorelis þus to knacke notis for many markis & poundis; but þei wolen not ȝeue here almes to prestis & children to lerne & to<sup>2</sup> teche goddis lawe; & þus bi þis nouelrie of song is goddis lawe vnstudied & not kepte, & pride & opore grete synnys meynthyng. & þes fonnyd lordis & peple gessen to haue more þank of god & to<sup>2</sup> worschipe hym more in haldyng vp of here owen nouelries wij grete cost þan in lernyng & techyng & meynthyng of his lawe & his seruauantis & his ordynauce. but where is more

People hire priests for their tricky singing; but will not give true alms.

disceit in feiþ, hope & charite? for whanne þer ben fourty or fyfty in a queer þre or foure proude & lecherous lorellis schullen knacke þe most deuout seruyce þat noman schal here þe sentence, & alle opore schullen be doumbe & loken on hem as foolis. & þanne strumpatis & þeuys preisen sire iacke or hobbe & williem þe proude clerk, hou smale þei knacken here notis; & seyn þat þei seruen wel god & holy chirche, whanne þei dispisen god in his face, & letten opore cristene men of here deuocion & compuncion, & stiren hem to worldly vanyte; & þus trewe seruyce of god is lettid & þis veyn knackyng for oure iolite & pride is preised abouen þe mone.

In a large choir two or three sing, and the rest look on.

Ordinal of Salis bury

¶ Also þe ordynalle of salisbury lettij moche prechyng of þe gospel; for folis chargen þat more þan þe maundementis of god & to studie & teche cristis gospel; for ȝif a man faile in

<sup>1</sup> baitale X.<sup>2</sup> omitted X.

his ordynale men holden þat grete synne & reprocen hym þer-  
of faste, but ȝif a preste breke þe hestis of god men chargen <sup>made more of</sup>  
þat litel or nouȝt; & so ȝif prestis seyn here matynes, masse <sup>than God's com-</sup>  
& euensong aftir salisbury vsee, þei hem self & oþere men <sup>mande.</sup>  
demen it is ynowȝ, þouȝ þei neiþer preche ne teche þe hestis of  
god & þe gospel. & þus þei wenen þat it is ynowȝ to fulfille  
synful mennus ordynaunce & to leue þe riȝtfulleste ordynaunce  
of god þat he chargid prestis to performe. but, lord, what  
was prestis office ordeyned bi god bifore þat salisbury vss was  
maad of proude prestis, coueitous, lecherous \* & dronkelewe? \* [p. 169 MS.]  
where god þat dampneþ alle ydelnesse chargid<sup>1</sup> hem not at  
þe full wiþ þe beste occupacion for hem self & oþere men?  
hou doren synful folis chargen cristis prestis wiþ so moche <sup>Burden of so</sup>  
nouelrie, & euermore cloute more to, þat þei may not frely do <sup>many rules,</sup>  
goddis ordynaunce? for þe iewis in þe olde lawe haden not so <sup>more than under</sup>  
manye seremonyes of sacrifices ordeyned bi god as prestis han <sup>the Old Law.</sup>  
now riȝttis & reulis maade of synful men. And ȝit þe olde  
lawe in þes charious customes mosten nedes cesse for fredom  
of cristis gospel; but þis fredom is more don awei bi þis  
nouelrie þan bi customes of þe olde lawe; & þus many grete  
axen where a prest may wiþ-uten dedly synne seie his masse  
wiþ-uten matynys; & þei demen it dedly synne, a prest to  
fulfille þe ordynaunce of god in his fredom wiþ-oute nouelrie  
of synful men, þat lettij prestis fro þe betre occupacion, as  
ȝif þei demen it dedly synne to leue þe worse þing<sup>2</sup> & take  
þe betre whanne þei may not do boþe to-gidre. & þus, lord,  
þin owen ordynaunce þat þou madist for þi prestis is holden  
errour & distroied for þe fonnyd nouelrie of synful foolis, &  
in cas of fendis in helle. ¶ But here men moste be war þat <sup>Men must not</sup>  
vnder colour of þis fredom þei ben betre occupied in þe lawe <sup>abuse Christ's</sup>  
of god to studie & teche it, & not alouȝ ne ydel in ouermuche <sup>freedom by</sup>  
sleep & vanyte & oþer synnes, for þat is þe fendis panter. <sup>slouȝh.</sup>  
¶ See now þe blyndnesse of þes foolis; þei seyn þat a prest may <sup>Matins held</sup>  
be excused fro seiynge of masse þat god comaundid him self <sup>more binding</sup>  
than the masse.

<sup>1</sup> chargen X.<sup>2</sup> teching AA.

Work wasted on  
service books  
that should be  
given to bibles.

to þe substance þer-of, so þat he here on. But he schal not be excused but þif he seie matynes & euensong him self þat synful men han ordeyned, & þus þei chargen more here owene fyndynge þan cristis comanðement. A lord, þif alle þe studie & traueile þat men han now abowte salisbury vs wif multitude of<sup>1</sup> newe costy portos, antifeners, graielis, & alle opere bokis weren turned in-to makynge of biblis & in studiynge & techynge þer-of, hou moche schulde goddis lawe be forþered & knowen & kept, & now in so moche it is hyndrid, vnstudied & vnkept. lord, hou schulden riche men ben excused þat costen so moche in grete schapellis & costy bokis of mannus ordynaunce for fame & nobleie of þe world, & wolen not spende so moche aboute bokis of goddis lawe & for to studie hem & teche hem, siþ þis were wif-oute comparison betre on alle siddis & lyttere & sykerere. but þit

Men that know  
better waste their  
time on services  
that they may  
note cause scandal.

men þat knowen þe fredom of goddis ordynaunce for preestis to be þe beste wif grete sorow of herte seyn here matynes, masse & euensong, whanne þei schulden ellis be betre occupied, last þei schlaundren þe sike conscience of here breþeren þat þit knowen not goddis lawe. god brynge þes preestis to þe fredom to studie holy writt, & lyue þer-after, & teche it opere men frely, & to preie as long and as moche as god meueþ \*hem þer-to, & ellis turne to opere medeful werkis, as crist & his apostlis diden; & þat þei ben not constreyned to blabre alle day wif tonge & grete crynge, as pies & iaies, þing þat þei knowen not & to peiere here owen soule for defaute of wis deuocion & charite.

\*[p. 170 MS.]

Worldly business  
stops priests from  
preaching.

Also bysynesse of worldly occupacion of preestis lettith prechyng of þe gospel, for þei ben so besy þer<sup>2</sup> aboute & namely in herte, þat þei þenken litel on goddis lawe & han no sauour þer-to. ¶ And seyn þat þei don þus for hospitalite & to releue pore men wif dedis of charite; but, hou euere men speken, it his for here owen coueitise, & lustful lif in mete & drynk & precious clopis, & for name of þe world in fedynge of riche men, & litel or nouȝt comeþ frely

<sup>1</sup> & X.

<sup>2</sup> omitted X.

to pore men þat han most nede. But þes prestis schulden sue crist in manere of lif & trewe techynge; but crist lefte sich occupacion, and his apostlis also, & weren betre occupied in holy preiere & trewe techynge of þe gospel; & þis determinacion & ful sentence was ȝouen of alle þe apostlis to-gidre whanne þei hadden receyved þe plenteuous ȝifts of þe holy gost. Lord! where þes worldly prestis ben wisere þan ben alle þe apostlis of crist? it semeth þat þei ben or ellis<sup>1</sup> þei ben<sup>2</sup> fooles. also crist wolde not take þe kyngdom whan þe puple wolde haue maad him kyng, as iones gospel telleþ; but if it haade be a prestis<sup>3</sup> office to dele aboute þus bodily<sup>4</sup> almes, Crist þat coude best haue do þis office wolde haue take þes temperal goodis to dele hem among poeure men; but he wolde not do þus, but fley and took no man of þe aposteles wiþ him, so faste he hiede. lord, where worldly prestis kunnen bettere don þis partinge of worldly goodis þan<sup>4</sup> ihū crist? And ȝif þei seyn þat crist fedde þe puple in desert with bodily almes manye þousand, as þe gospel saiþ; þat dide crist by miracle to shewe his godhede and to teche prestes hou; þei schulden fede gostly cristene men by goddis word; for so dide cristis aposteles and hadde not where-of to do bodily almes, whan þei miȝten haue had tresour and iuelis y-nowe of kynggis & lordis. Also peter saiþ in dedis of apostlis to a pore man þat to him neiþer was gold ne siluer, and ȝit he performede wel þe office of a trewe prest; but oure prestis ben so bysye aboute worldly occupacioun þat þei semen bettere bailynes or reues þan gostly prestis of ihū crist. For what man is so bysy aboute marchaundise and oþere worldly doyngis as ben preostes, þat shulden ben lyȝt of heuenly lif to alle men abouten hem? but certes þei shulde be as bysy aboute studyinge of goddis lawe and holy preyer, not of famulorum but of holy desires and clene meditacioun of god, and trewe techinge of þe gospel, as ben laboreris aboute worldly labour for here sustenance; and mucche more bysie

Christ's example  
and his apostles',  
who would not  
serve tables.  
Acts vi. [2].

John vi. [15].

Christ fled when  
the people would  
have made him  
king.

The apostles had  
not wherewith to  
give alms.

Acts iii. 6.

Priests now are  
more like balliffs.

<sup>1</sup> omitted X.

<sup>2</sup> apostlis A.A.

<sup>3</sup> bodi X.

<sup>4</sup> of X.

ȝif þei miȝten, for þey ben more holden for to lyue wel and  
 ȝeue<sup>1</sup> ensauple of holi lif to þe puple & trewe techinge of  
 holy writ þanne þe people is holden to ȝyue hem dymes or  
 offringis or ony bodily almes; and þerfore prestis shulde not  
 leue ensauple of good lif & studyinge of holi writ & trewe  
 techinge þer-of<sup>2</sup> for no<sup>3</sup> bodily almes, ne for worldly goodis,  
 ne for sauynge of here bodily lif. and as crist sauede þe  
 world by writynge & techinge of foure Euaungelistis, so þe  
 fend casteth to dampne þe world and prestis for lettynge to  
 preche þe gospel by þes foure; by feyned contemplacioun,  
 by song, by salisbury vse, & by worldly bysynes of prestis.  
 God for his mercy styre þes prestis to preche þe gospel in  
 word, in lif, and bewar of sathanas disceitis. Amen.

The devil's plots.

<sup>1</sup> omitted X.

<sup>2-3</sup> ne X.

## XI.

## THE PATERNOSTER.

THIS tract should be compared with that printed by Mr. Arnold (S. E. W. III. 98), to which it has many points of likeness.

It is not improbable that Wyclif should have written more than one tract in explanation and praise of the Lord's Prayer, since he was never tired of opposing its excellence to the vanity of the church prayers of his day. There is nothing here which enables us to fix either date or authorship with certainty, but I take the tract to be genuine from its close connexion with that which follows, as to which I have scarcely any doubt.

The tract is found only in X. from which it has been copied.

## SUMMARY.

The prayer is taken by petitions, each of which is explained, and to each is assigned some special virtue. Finally comes a praise of the prayer and of Christ's goodness in giving it to us.

Þis his þe pater noster.

\*[p. 172 MS.]

\*Oure fadir þat art in heuenes, halwid be þi name. þi reume or kyngdom come to þe. be þi wille don in herþe as it is don in heuene. ȝeue to vs to-day oure eche dayes bred. & forȝeue to vs oure dettis, þat is oure synnys, as we forȝeuen to oure dettouris, þat is to men þat han synned in vs. & lede vs not in-to temptacion, but delyuere vs from euyl. amen, so be it. Whanne we seyn, oure fadir þat art

We are to love  
each other as  
children of one  
Father.

in heuenes, we ben tauȝt to loue eche oþer as breþren of o fadir & o modir bodily, & moche more, siȝ god is oure fadir þat made vs of nouȝt; & we ben tauȝt to lyuen in mekenesse eche to oþer, & to desire heuenly þingis, as vertues & holy lif, & don alle oure dedis prenyly & apert for þe honour of god & þe blisse of heuene; & so oure lif owiȝ to be in heuenys be holy desir & lastyng. & þus at þe bigynnynge we moten be meke & in charite to alle men, boȝe cristene & heþene, & frendis & enemyes, & ellis we ben not worþi to preie þis pater noster. whanne we seyn, halwid be þi name, we

1st petition.

We pray for holli-  
ness

preien þat we ben maad holy & stable in vertues bi þe holy name of god & his grace & his vertue; þat we ben holy bi grace as oure fadir god is holy of hym self. in þis word we axen deuoutly sadnesse of feiȝ, wiȝ-oute whiche feiȝ we may not plesse god; & we preien þat alle manere of pride, boȝe in þouȝt & spekyng & dede & alle manere beryng & countenance, be putt away fro vs, for suche pride makȝ men luciferis children; & þat alle manere verrey mekenessis be grounded in vs aȝenst þis pride, for verrey mekenesse makȝ

and meekness.

2nd petition.

vs goddis children. ¶ whanne we seyn þi kyngdom or reume come to þe, we preien þat alle men & wommen lyuyng in þis world þat schullen be sauȝd, & alle þat ben departed come \*to þe Blisse of Heuene as soone as god wole, to see þere oure blissed spouse ihū crist, & haue endeles ioie wiȝ him & his angelis & seyntis. for alle angelis & men & wommen þat schullen be sauȝd ben goddis kyngdom & holy chirche; &

\*[p. 173 MS.]

God's kingdom  
(the Church) con-  
sists of all that  
shall be saved.



oure lord ihū is kyng of þis reume & heed of þis holy  
chirche; & alle þo þat schullen be dampnyd in helle ben  
deuelis chirche or synagoge, & þe deuel is here false prince  
& kyng, but ~~raþere~~ her tiraunt. & here we axen trewe hope We pray for hope  
& lastyng to haue þe blisse of heuene, be *mercy* of oure god  
& bi oure goode lif & endyng in *perfit* charite. in þis word and charity.  
we preien þat alle cursed enuye & hate be putt away from vs,  
& þat alle brennyng charite to god & oure euene cristene be  
so sadly rotyd in vs þat it faile neuere in þis lif for no þing  
þat may be. ¶ Whanne we seyn, þei wille be don in erþe 3rd petition.  
riȝt as it is in heuene, we preien þat we don þe wille of god  
wiþ-uten any errour & wiþ-uten any cessyng, as blissed  
aungelis don euere in heuene, & þat we don þis wille of god  
wiþ riȝt fulle vnderstandyng, & wiþ grete desir & ioie &  
likyng, & not wiþ heynessee & grucchyng. ¶ In þis word  
we axen þat in alle þingis oure wille be confermed to goddis  
wille, þat no þing may departe oure wille & oure loue fro  
god, þat is endeles good & riȝtful. ¶ And here we preien  
algatis to geten þe heȝe *vertue* of charite, wiþ-uten whiche We pray for  
charity,  
alle oþere þingis ben not worþi to vs to bryng vs to heuene.  
& here we preien þat god kepe vs fro wickid coueitise of  
worldly goodis, þat we offenden not goddis comaundementis and to be kept  
from breaking  
God's command-  
ments.  
ne good conscience, neiþer for wynnynge ne holdynge forþ of  
worldly goodis; for he þat bi brekyng of goddis hestis, as bi  
false sweryngis, false mesures or weiȝtis, or ony sleiȝtte,  
getiþ or holdiþ his neiȝeboris goodis, doþ not goddis wille, but  
is þef & traitour of god & his neiȝeboris bi goddis lawe.  
¶ Whanne we seyn, ȝeue vs to-day oure eche dayes breed, we 4th petition.  
preien for nedeful sustenance of oure body, & for to haue We pray for bodi-  
ly sustenance  
vnderstandyng & kepyng of goddis word, & namely of his  
hestis þat ben gostly sustenance of oure soule, & þat we han  
þis sustenance trewely geten, not by raueyne ne extortion ne honestly got,  
falsnesse, but þat it be spendid in *seruyce* of god & his drede;  
& þat we þanken mekely oure god for alle his grace & ȝiftis  
þat he ȝeueþ vs of his grete goodness. ¶ In þis word we  
preien to haue þe *vertue* of prudence to knowe whiche and for prudence.

sustenance is nedeful & resonable to vs, & what we owen to do þerfore to god, & in what mesure we schullen take it, to putte away alle manere glotonye & dronkenesse & coriouste & wast of metis & drynkis; for þis glotonye & dronkenesse makij men to loue more here bely & here golet þan god almytty; \*for þei maken here wombe here false god, as seynt poul seiþ. Whanne we seyn, & forþeue vs oure dettis, þat is oure synnes, as we forþeuen to hours dettouris, þat is to men þat han trespassed aȝenst vs, we<sup>1</sup> preien þat god haue mercy on vs as we han mercy on hem þat han wrappid vs. certis if we han no mercy on hem þat trespassen aȝenst vs, we preien god aȝenst oure owene heed þat he dampne vs for oure synnys. but here men moten forþeue þe rancour, hate & euyl wille of here herte to here neiȝeboris, but þei may lawefully pursue worldly dette, so þat þei do þis bi iuste menes, & kepe pacience & charite; & if men ben pore & iust of lif & wolden fayn paie, & traueile bisily þerfore in treuþe, & ben not wastouris of here litil good, þanne þis preiere wole þat siche<sup>2</sup> pore ben not prisonyd ne peyned, but bi pacience & mercy suffer til þei may paie. In þis word<sup>3</sup> we preien to haue þe vertue of riȝtwisnesse to putten out vnresonable wrappe & vengauce, & holden vs sadde in verrey mercy & pacience aȝenst malencolie & puttynge away of reson, so þat reson & mercy reule welle alle oure stiringis of herte & speche & doyng. Whanne we seyn, & ne lede vs not in-to temptacion, we preien þat god suffre vs not bi wiȝdrawyng of his grace & helpe be ouercomen in temptacions of þe deuył, of þe world, & of þe fleschly lustis or foule delectacions. for it is profitable to be temptid & wiȝ-stonde þe temptacions bi helpe of god & his angelis, for þere is oure mede & ioie restorid; but it is euyl to ben ouercomen in þis temptacion, & þat schal not be but be oure owene negligence & slouȝte & fals likyng in synne. þerfore in þis word we preien to haue þe vertue of gostly strengþe, to be strong bi

\*[p. 174 MS.]  
Phil. iii. 19.  
5th petition.

We pray for  
mercy.

Does not forbid  
us to ask for  
debts.

We pray for  
righteousness.

6th petition.

We pray not to  
be overcome by  
temptation,

and to have  
spiritual  
strength.

<sup>1</sup> MS. he.

<sup>2</sup> MS. whiche.

<sup>3</sup> MS. world.

helpe of þe holy gost aȝenst alle temptacions, & þat we ben  
 not hardid in synne, but þat we waken in holy preieris &  
 good occupacion, & haue saad mynde of þe schortnesse of  
 lykyng in synne, & on þe bittre peynes of purgatorie & helle;  
 & ȝif we wolen, bi þis mynde & occupacion siþ goddis grace  
 & helpe is redy, we schullen ouercomen alle oure temptacions  
 & gete oure corone in heuene wiþ-uten ende. ¶ Whanne we  
 seyn, but delyuere vs fro euyl, we preien þat god delyuere <sup>7th petition.</sup>  
 vs from alle euyl of synne & peyne boþe of body & soule in <sup>We pray to be  
saved from sin  
and pain,</sup>  
 þis lif & in purgatorie<sup>1</sup> & namely fro peyne of helle, & þat  
 we falle not in-to dispeir of goddis mercy for olde rotyng &  
 custome in synne. In þis word we preien to haue þe vertue <sup>and to have  
temperance.</sup>  
 of temperaunce, to take so worldly goodis & myrþe þat we  
 forȝeten not god in heuenly blisse, & þat we tempere so þe  
 stiryngis of oure fleisch þat we delen not fleischly wiþ ony  
 woman but ȝif it be in verrey & laweful \*matrimonye; & in \*<sup>[p. 175 MS.]</sup>  
 drede of god, & not as bestis wiþ-uten reson, þat ben alle  
 seit abouten here lustis & forȝeten god & alle his werkis.  
 for þe archangel raphael tauȝte tobie þat þe deuyl haþ power <sup>Tobit. vi. 17.</sup>  
 ouer sicke men þat þus defoulen þe ordre of matrimonye &  
 don al for here lustis & forȝeten god & his drede & don as  
 bestis wiþ-oute discrecion. ¶ God delyuere vs from alle euyl of  
 synne preuy & apert, & namely fro enduryng in synne &  
 dispeir of goddis mercy, & fro bodely werris & vengauce &  
 peynes, boþe in þis lif & purgatorie & helle; & graunt vs bi  
 riȝt feiþ trewe & profit charite to gete heuenly blisse. so be it  
 ihū for þi grete mercy. ¶ Certis þis pater noster passiþ alle <sup>Excellence of the  
Paternoster.</sup>  
 oþere preieris in auctorite, in sotilte & profit boþe of soule &  
 body. It is of most auctorite; for oure lord ihū crist, god &  
 man, made it & comaundid cristene men to seie it; but oþere  
 preieris ben made bi men, & enclosen noon oþer sentence  
 þan doþ þis pater noster, but ȝif it be errour. þerfore as ihū  
 crist is more worþi þan oþere synful men, so þis pater noster  
 is of more auctorite þan is preiere maad of oþere men, þouȝ  
 here preiere be good. þis pater noster is more sotil þan

<sup>1</sup> Scored through in MS.

oþere preieris; for it is maad of endeles wisdom & charite of crist, & encloseþ alle þinkyngis þat ben nedful boþe for body & soule in þis world & þe toþer; & oure lord ihū made it in schorte wordis & moche witt, for men schulden not be heuy ne excusen hem fro kunnyng & seiynge þer-of. it is of most profit, for þif a man seie it wel he ne schal faille no þing þat is nedful & profitable for bodily lif & vertuous, to brynge men to heuene & haue blisse in body & soule wip-oute ende. lord, hou moche ben þei to blame þat bisien hem aboute preieris maade of synful men & leuen þis pater noster þat is best & most hesy of alle, & comprehendþ alle goodis for body & soule. blissed be þis endeles goode lord, þat of his endeles wisdom & charite tauȝte þis schorte preiere. Amen.

## XII.

## THE AVE MARIA.

I HAVE no doubt of the genuineness of this tract. The tone and manner are Wyclif's, and the invective against the frivolity of the gentry suits better a man who had lived at court than one of the obscure poor preachers. Besides the general style there is one passage which bears a special mark of Wyclif. On page 208 we are told, "God the Trinity is with each creature . . . to keep it; for else it should turn to naught." The belief of the immanence of God in all created things is one which Wyclif held firmly. (Cf. *Cum ergo in qualibet creatura est Trinitas increata*.—*Trial*, iv. 27.) The doctrine was brought into popular use in his latest controversies on the Eucharist, but used as it is here, in a different connexion and incidentally, it is a sign of the hand of the master rather than one of his pupils.

Copied from the Corpus MS. X. and collated with the MS. A. 4. 12., at Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge, which I have distinguished in the notes as SS.

## SUMMARY.

How this invocation is made up, and the lesson from it. ....	p. 204
The evil of women who are given to vanity. ....	204
Prevalence of frivolity among gentlefolk. ....	205
Gross amusements at Christmas. ....	206
The bad spirit prevalent in courts. ....	207
How God was with Mary and is in men. ....	208

Þis is þe aue maria.

Heil 'be þou,' marie, ful of grace, þe lord is wiþ þe. blissed be þou among wymmen, & blissed be þe fruyt of þi wombe, ihū *crist*.<sup>3</sup> amen. so be it. þe arcangel gabriel sent of god grette oure ladie seynte marie wiþ þes wordis, heil. be þou ful of grace. þe lord is wiþ þe. blissed be þou among wymmen. & he seide no moo wordis, as þe firste<sup>2</sup> gospel of seynt luk techiþ,<sup>4</sup> but elizebeth, þe modir of seynt ion baptist, seide þes wordes to oure lady whanne sche hadde conseyued crist; blissed be þou among wymmen & blissed be þe fruyt of þi wombe. as þe same gospel techiþ<sup>4</sup>; but cristene men for deuocion adden to þes tweie wordis, marie & ihū *crist*; \* & men seyn þat popis graunte moche pardon þerfore, but hou euere it be of pardon, þis addynge to is trewe, for þe gospel techiþ<sup>4</sup> vs þes names & þei stiren men to deuocion. ¶ Here men & wommen, & namely gentil wommen, schulden lerne<sup>5</sup> mekenesse, chastite, charite, sobirnesse & schamefastenesse, to be aschamyd of eche euyl speche, & namely of lecherie & euyl contenaunce of synne & ribaudrie & vilonye<sup>6</sup> and<sup>7</sup> lerne holy deuocion, & þanne þei worschipen wel ihū here gostly spouse & seynt marie his modir; & þif þei lyuen in pride of herte for nobeleie of blood or<sup>8</sup> kyn & rentis & richessis of þe world, & han indignacion and<sup>9</sup> dispit of oþere pore men or wymmen; <sup>10</sup>and delyten hem <sup>10</sup>is lecherie in ony degree; or in hate & enuye or glotonye & dronkenesse & boldnesse in synne, & colouren & meynntenen it and lyuen in riot, daunsynge & lepynge in nyztis & alepen out of reson on þe morwe, & forȝeten god & his drede & deuocion of preieris; what euere here tonge blabre, here euyl lif blasphemeth & dispisiþ boþe ihū here noble spouse & his modir marie, tresour of clennessse & deuocion. ¶ And þif þei

How this invocation is made up.

Luke i. 28.

Luke i. 42.

\*[p. 176 MS.]  
Indulgenoes.

Evil life blasphemous Jesus and Mary.

<sup>1</sup> omitted SS.

<sup>4</sup> telliþ SS.

<sup>7</sup> omitted X.

<sup>2</sup> omitted SS.

<sup>5</sup> lyuen al in SS.

<sup>6</sup> & X. <sup>9</sup> omitted X.

<sup>3</sup> omitted SS.

<sup>6</sup> vilenþe X.

<sup>10-10</sup> omitted X.

maken hem more bisi in herte & dede to be <sup>1</sup>gaie and costelewe of array <sup>1</sup> of cloþis & keuerohers and perlis & ribanys, or siche vanytes, to maken here body fresch and <sup>2</sup>likyng to mennus eijen to coueiten hem, þan to gete vertues in here soule to make it fair to þe holy trinyte & to ihū here worþieste spouse, þei ben out of charite, & þe deuelis panter, to kacche men in-to synne of lecherie & many moo synnes <sup>3</sup>& holde hem þer-inne, til sathanas drawe hem boþe in-to helle; & what euere nobleie or dignyte þat <sup>4</sup>þei han in þis world, be þei gentil men or wymmen, for þis cursed lif þei ben cherlis or bonde wymmen of synne, & fendis of helle, & gostly spouse brekeris or avouteris, & lemmans of foule sathanas þat is foulere þan ony mesel or leprous in þis world. & but ȝif þei amenden hem in þis world <sup>4</sup>þei schullen be of hem þat god spekiþ of in iobis bok. <sup>5</sup>¶ Þei leden, seiþ god, here daies in lustful goodis & myrþis of þis world & in a poynt of tyme fallen doun in-to helle. sumtyme curtesie & genterie was vertuouse <sup>6</sup>lif & honest in word & dede & alle manere of good <sup>7</sup>berynge, & suster of holynesse; but now it is turned in-to vanyte & nysete & knackis & iapis & is ȝate of synne, of pride, of rebaudrie, sleuþe, coueitise, glotonye, dronkenesse & lecherie & meyntenynge of synne & hordam, <sup>8</sup>of wraþþe & enuye & bost & cursed swerynge & wast of goodis & robbynge of pore men <sup>9</sup>& distroiyng of londis & good cristendom. <sup>10</sup>¶ O ȝe gentil wommen, þenkiþ hou noble wommen & clene & stedefast han be bfore ȝou, as oure lady seynt marie, marie magdaleyne, sussanne, katherine, margare, anneys, <sup>11</sup>cicile \* & many moo, & take what goode ensauple ȝe may of here mekenesse & holynesse; for whanne wymmen ben turnyd fully to goodnesse ful <sup>12</sup>hard it is þat ony man passe hem in goodnesse. And as <sup>13</sup>hard it <sup>13</sup>is <sup>13</sup>þat ony man passe hem in synne whanne þei ben turnyd to pride & lecherie & dronke-

Women who care more for fine clothes than virtues are the devil's snare.

Job xxi. 13.

Courtesy and gentility are now degraded.

Gentlewomen should think on the example of the saints.

\*[p. 177 MS.]

When women are good it is hard for men to be better, and it is hard for a man to pass them in wickedness when bad.

<sup>1-1</sup> gaie in costelewe array X.

<sup>2</sup> in X.

<sup>3</sup> omitted X.

<sup>4</sup> lyfe SS.

<sup>5</sup> þe bok of iob SS.

<sup>6</sup> vertues X.

<sup>7</sup> omitted X.

<sup>8</sup> hord X.

<sup>9-9</sup> omitted SS.

<sup>10</sup> margarete, agnes SS.

<sup>11</sup> omitted X.

<sup>12</sup> omitted X.

Young women  
may sometimes  
dance.

Gross amuse-  
ments at Christ-  
mas.

Too much care  
given to the body  
and its adorn-  
ment.

Noblemen should  
repress swearing  
and loose talk in  
their presence.

nesse. I gesse wel þat þonge wymmen may sumtyme daunsen<sup>1</sup> in mesure to haue recreation and lihtnesse, so þat þei haue þe more þouȝt on myrþe in heuene & drede more & loue more god þer-by, & synge honeste songis of cristis incarnacion, passion, resurexion & ascencion, & of þe ioies of oure ladi, & to dispise synne & preise vertue in alle here doynge<sup>2</sup>; but now he þat kan best pleie a pagyn<sup>3</sup> of þe deuyl, syngynge songis of lecherie, of bataillis and<sup>4</sup> of lesyngis, & crie as a wood man & dispise goddis maieste & swere bi herte, bonys & alle membris of crist, is holden most merie mon<sup>5</sup> & schal haue most þank of pore & riche; & þis is clepid worschipe of þe grete solempnyte of cristismasse; & þus for þe grete kyndenesse & goodnesse þat crist dide to men in his incarnation<sup>6</sup> we dispisen hym more in outrage of pride, of glotonye, lecherie & alle manere harlotrie. & bi þis doynge þe fend bryngeþ in iolite of body & myrþe & likynge & newe fyndynge vp of synne, in-stede of holynesse & gostly ioie & herynge of god for his endeles charite, mercy, mekenesse & kyndenesse. lord, where is þat man or womman þat makith hym so bisi to make his soule fair in vertues<sup>7</sup> to goddis sichte as he makith hym bisi aboute atir of body for þe sichte of men? Alas, þat so gret cost & bisynesse is sette abouten þe roten body, þat is wormes mete & a sak of drit & dust & aschis; but aboute þe soule made to þe ymage of þe trinyte, & þe whiche soule crist bouȝte so dere wiþ his precious herte blood, is no bisynesse to clense it out<sup>8</sup> of synne but to brynge it in-to more synne boþ nyȝt & day. litel þenk þes woode men & wommen on cristis pouert & cold & pouert of his modir & what lif he lyuede in þis world in so gret penaunce & dispit & wepyng for oure synnys & what schameful deþ he suffrid at þe laste. þes lordis & ladies schulden suffre in here presence & courtis no dispisyng of god bi wood<sup>9</sup> swerynge, bi wordis of lecherie, ny<sup>10</sup> opore rebaudrie and vnreasonable

<sup>1</sup> playen hem SS.

<sup>4</sup> omitted X.

<sup>7</sup> ones SS.

<sup>2</sup> cunnyng SS.

<sup>5</sup> carnacion X.

<sup>8</sup> opes SS.

<sup>3</sup> pagent SS.

<sup>6</sup> vertuose X.

<sup>9</sup> be X.



speche; for þif þei suffreden ony of here *seruauntis* to dispise  
 oure erþely kyng moche ponyschyng schulde come <sup>1</sup>to hem<sup>1</sup>  
 & þei ben holden false & traitour<sup>2</sup> to þe kyng. o hou moche  
 more traitours & false ben þes worldly lordis<sup>3</sup> to crist kyng of  
 alle heuene & alle erþe & helle, whanne þei heren sich dispit  
 don to his maieste & refreyenen not here *seruauntis* þer-of.  
*cortis* ensaumples of clennesses, honeste & holynesse cam sum-  
 tyme<sup>4</sup> fro lordis courtis to þe comyns, & þan was holy lif in  
 worschipe among pore & riche. But now cometh ensaumples of  
 pride, glotony, lecherie & hal harlotrie fro lordis courtis to þe  
 comyns. And herefore regneth synne in alle manere peple  
 wiþ-uten schame. þus þe fend blyndith men to clepe þis  
 cursed hauntyng of arlotrie & synne gret worschipe of god,  
 & to clepe deuocion of preieris & sade mynde of cristis pouert,  
 penaunce & deþ & of þe day of dome ypocrisie & folie; &  
 suche men ben not worþi to dwelle in lordis courtis, laste þei  
 dryuen away þe deuyll & his scole of synne & vanyte to  
 displeyng<sup>5</sup> of þonge, nyce folis, & bryngen in crist in-to  
 cristen<sup>6</sup> mennus soulis & his<sup>7</sup> scole of vertues & honeste in  
 þowt, worde & dede, to<sup>8</sup> plesyng of god & sauynge of  
 mennus soulis. ¶ Heil marie, þat is wel be to þe, marie; or  
 ioie be to þe. for bi<sup>9</sup> þat womman<sup>10</sup> eue cam sorowe, payne &  
 woo to mankynde for sche trusted not sadly to goddis word  
 but trusted to þe fendis gabbyng & coueited ouer-moche  
 kunnyng & dingnyte; but bi sad bileue & mekenesse &  
 charite of marie cam ioie & saluacion to mankynde, for her  
 bi sche conseyuede crist as þe gospel seiþ. þerfore flee  
 lesyngis & pride & holde sadly bileue of goddis word with  
 mekenesse & charite & þou schalt haue part of maries<sup>11</sup> ioie &  
 bliasse of heuene eueremore. marie cristis modir was ful of  
 grace. seynt steuene was ful of grace, as holy writt seiþ,  
 but lasse þan oure lady, & oure swete lord ihu was ful of  
 grace aboue steuene & oure ladi þer-to. & so þer ben þre

[p. 178 MS.]

Courts set a bad example to the commons.

Good men not allowed to live in courts.

Eve brought sorrow to men,

Mary brought joy.

Acts vi. 8.

<sup>1</sup> omitted X.      <sup>2</sup> as false traitours SS.<sup>4</sup> displeyng SS.      <sup>6</sup> omitted X.<sup>7</sup> in X.      <sup>8</sup> omitted X.<sup>3</sup> omitted X.<sup>5</sup> usen SS.<sup>9</sup> blessing & þe SS.

God is in all  
creatures,

but in good men  
by grace,

and in angels by  
showing himself  
clearly.

degrees of plente of grace. þe leste of þis plente was in steuene, þe mydil in oure lady, but þe most in oure lord ihū crist. ¶ God þe trinyte is wiþ eche creature bi myȝt, wisdom & goodnesse to kepe it, for ellis it schulde turne to noȝt; but god is wiþ goode men of vertuous lif bi grace to approue & accepte here doynȝis & helpe hem þer-inne, to rewarde hem in blisse þerfore, & dwelliþ in here soulis as his owen temple, & makij hem ioiffully dwelle in his seruyce & suffre<sup>1</sup> gladly alle dispitis & persecucion for his name; but god is in angelis & seyntis in heuene bi clier schewynge of his godhed to hem & makynge hem to knowe alle þingis & haue alle þat euere þei desiren wiþ-outen ony anoye or peyne. ¶ Blissed be þou among wymmen; þat is more þan ony oþer womman, for noon oþer was so sad in bileue ne so meke ne so chast ne so goode in alle manere holynesse & namely in brennynge charite. ȝif þou wilt haue part of maries blisse & goddis blissyng sue marie in þis holy lif &<sup>2</sup> namely in þes seuene, feiþ, hope, & charite, & mekenesse, chastite, sobirnesse, & brynnynge desir of riȝtwisnesse. And blissed be þe fruyt of þi womb: þat is ihū, for bi his mercy & grace comeþ alle goodnesse, & namely bi his trewe techynge & wilful deþ & endeles myȝt, be whiche he schal reise alle men at domes day & ȝif blisse of heuene in bodi & soule to þo þat ende in perfit charite. god ȝeue vs grace to þenke on cristis mercy & riȝtwisnesse & maries sadnesse in bileue, & mekenesse to make ende in perfit charite. Amen.

<sup>1</sup> suffrij X.

<sup>2</sup> in X.

## XIII.

## HOW SATAN AND HIS CHILDREN, ETC.

THE tiresome series of antitheses between Christ and the fiend with which this tract begins are in Wyclif's worst manner, if indeed they are his.

The characteristic point of this tract is its insistence on the hardships of imprisonment for debt, on the cruelty of those who inflict it unjustly, (pp. 211 and 214), and on the folly of those who fall into it through drunkenness (p. 217). I do not remember any other tract in which this point is pressed so much.

Whoever the author was, he knew the poor and felt for them; notice, among other things, his description of the bed-ridden poor as couching on muck or dust (p. 211), and his complaint that the aged poor had to drink water and fell into fevers. (Did he look upon wine as a febrifuge?)

Copied from the Corpus MS. X. and collated with the Dublin MS. AA., where the first chapter and part of the second are wanting.

## SUMMARY.

CHAP. I.	The works of bodily mercy are enumerated, and the perversions of them prevalent among bad priests, etc.	.....	.....	.....	p. 210
II.	Contains a similar list of contrasts as to the works of spiritual mercy				212
III.	The temptations offered us by the five senses are enumerated and contrasted with the right use of the senses.	.....	.....	.....	216

Hou sathanas & his children turnen werkis of mercy  
vpsodom & disceyuen men þer-inne & in here fyue  
wittis.

*Capitulum primum.*

\*[179 MS.]  
Christ orders us  
to feed the poor;  
the devil teaches  
us to make feasts  
for the rich,

and to give them  
wines and spiced  
ale,

and to let the sick  
poor drink water.

Christ teaches us  
to clothe the  
naked; the devil  
teaches to waste  
rich clothes on  
vagabonds.

Men of religion  
spend the money  
of the poor on  
adorning horses  
and vestments.

They waste money  
in  
decorating  
images.

Christ teaches to  
give shelter to  
the poor;

\*First crist comaundiþ men of power to fede hungry pore  
men; þe fend & his techen to make costy festis & waste  
many goodis on lordis & riche men & to suffre pore men  
sterue & perische for hunger & opere myscheuys; ȝe, men  
þat feynen hem ful of charite & religion gadren propre  
goodis to hem seluen & festen delicatly lordis & ladies &  
riche men & suffre here pore breþren begge for meschef &  
fare ful harde. crist comaundiþ to ȝeue drynk to þrusty men  
& wymmen; þe fend & his techen to purueye heiȝ wyn &  
spised ale & strong for riche men & lordis to make hem  
dronken & chide & fȳtte & forȝete god & his lawe, & to suffre  
pore þat han nouȝt of here owene & may not labore for  
febilnesse or sikenesse & blyndenesse drynke water & falle in  
feueris or ellis perische. crist comaundiþ to cloþe nakyd men  
& wymmen whanne þei han nouȝt of here owene; þer-to þe  
fend & his techen to ȝeue costly cloþis & manye to riche men  
& mynstralis or shauldours for worldly name, & suffre pore  
men haue nakid sidis & schakyngge lippis & hondis for cold  
þat woo is hem wiȝ þe lif. ȝe, prelatis & men of singuler  
religion, þat taken þe charge to ben procuratouris & dis-  
penderis of pore mennus lifode, cloþen fatte horsis & gaie  
sadlis & bridlis & mytris & croceris wiȝ gold & siluer &  
precious stonys & suffren pore men & children perische for  
cold; & ȝit þes prelatis & newe religious comen in staat of  
cristis pouert & his apostlis, & techen & crien þat what euere  
þei han is pore mennus goode. ȝit riche men cloþen<sup>1</sup> dede  
stockis & stonys wiȝ precious cloþis, wiȝ gold & siluer &  
perlis & gaynesse to þe world, & suffren pore men goo sore  
a cold & at moche meschefe. Crist techiþ to herbwre pore  
men þat han non houses ne peny to peye for here innys; þe

<sup>1</sup> closen MS.

fend & his techen to herberwe riche men & lordis wif gret cost & deyitte for worldly worschipe, & suffre pore men wander in stormys & slepe wif þe swyn, & many tymes suffre not hem come wif-inne here ȝatis, & to fynde many excusacions & coloure þis doynge. ȝe, ypocritis of priuat religion maken grete houses & costly & gaely peyntid \*more

the devil teaches to entertain rich men grandly.

þan kyngis & lordis bi sotil beggyng & confessions & trentalis & meyntenynge of synne, [and] herberewe lordis & riche men & namely ladies, & suffre pore men lie wif-uten or geten houslewth at pore men or ellis perische for wedris & cold.

The religious build great houses.  
\*[p. 180 MS.]

¶ Crist techiþ to visite sike men & counforte hem & helpe hem of sustenance; þe fend & his techen to visiten riche men, lordis & ladies in here prosperite & lykyng to be holden kynde & curteis, & to counforte eche oþer in synne & to haue lustis of glotony, lecherie & oþere schrewidnessis, but of pore men þat ben beddrede & couchen in muk or dust is litel þouȝt on or noȝt.

Christ teaches to visit the sick; the devil teaches to pay visits of ceremony to the prosperous.

¶ ȝit ypocritis of feyned religion visiten not fadirles children & modirles & widewis in here tribulacion & kepe not hem self vnblekid fro þis world, as seynt iame techiþ: but visete oft riche men & wymmen, & namely

Friars as bad as any.

riche widewis, for to gete worldly muk by false disceitis & carien it home to caymes castelis & anticristis couent & sathanas children & marteris of glotony.

James 1. 27.

¶ Crist techiþ to visite men in prison & helpe to delyuere hem in good manere

Christ teaches to visit men in prison;

& counforte hem bi almes ȝeuyng; þe fend & his presonen pore men for dette whanne þei ben not at power to paie, & traueile nyȝt & day & lyuen ful harde, & to lyue wif trewþe & susteynen<sup>1</sup> wif & children, & on hem is no mercy. ȝit feyned

the devil and his imprison for debt men who do their best to pay.

religious men pursuen pore preȝtis to prison & to brennyng bi many cursed lesyngis & sclaundryng priue & apert, for as mochel as þei prechen trewly & frely cristis gospel & goddis hestis & reprouen here ypocrisie, symonye, coueitise & oþere disceitis; & ȝit þes ypocritis blenden lordis & prelati to enprisonen siche pore preȝtis techyng þe trenþe bi comaundement & ensaumple of crist & his apostilis, not-wifstondyng

False religious persecute poor priests.

<sup>1</sup> susteynem MS.

Burial of the dead.

Religious fight for the "carrioun" of rich men, but will make no room for the poor.

\*[p. 181 MS]

þat lordis & prelatiſ ben charged vp peyne of dampnacion to helpe hem & meyntene þis treuþe & prechouris of it. ¶ It is holden a werk of mercy to brie dede men after þe techynge of goddis lawe; þe fend techiþ worldly riche men, clerkis & religious, to make solempnyte whanne riche men ben dede wiþ dirige & messis & wax & rengynge & grete festis, but whanne pore men ben dede vnneþe wole ony man berie hem or sie derige or masse. ¶ it feyned religious wolen come to riche mennus dirige in grete multitude & stire hem to be buried in here chirche, & stryuen & fytten for þe dede careyne for loue of offrynge & worldly honour, but pore men schullen not lie among hem þou; þei axen it neuere so faste for charite. & þus in stede of werkis of bodely mercy & charite is comen in ypocrisie of worldly name & coueitise & norischyng \* of synne & sotil excusynge þer-of, & euyl is clepid good & good euyl.

### Capitulum 2<sup>m</sup>.

Christ says we should teach God's commandments;

the devil teaches tricks of money-getting,

and stirs up patrons to give cures to men who are foolish and worldly.

A poor wretch of a curate looks after the parish,

Werkis of mercy ben worse turned vpsodoun. crist seiþ it is a souereyn werk of mercy & charite to teche vnlearnyd men þe riȝtte weie to heuene, þat is þe gospel & goddis comaundementis; þe fend & his seyn it is grete charite to teche þonge men & opere sotil craftis & nedeles & queynte sleiȝtis to disceyue schepische men of worldly goodis & make hem self riche & bostful & proude. & þe fend bi sotil menyngs of ypocrisie & symonye stireþ lordis & myȝtty men to make an ydiot & fool curatour of cristene soulis, þat neiþer may ne kan ne wole, for his opyn synne & worldly lif & ignoraunce of holy writt & negligence & worldly vanyte & drede of worldly shame & loos, teche hem goddis lawe, ne suffre opere to teche hem frely & trewely wiþ-outen flaterynge for drede last his owene falsnesse be knowen; & þit þes cursed aunaunsynge is clepid charite to helpe þus a pore man. But an ydiot & a lecherous wrecche schal be sett to kepe þe soulis for litel pris, & þe more lorel goo on haukyng & huntynge,

& *serue* in lordis courtis, in worldly offices, & þe deuyl drawiþ while the bigger rascal (his rector) goes hunting.  
 wiþ his helpis alle þat he may to helle & þis is clepid mercy & charite; but þis deuylis charite puttiþ oute charite & loue of god & bryngiþ in loue of money & synne & hate of vertues & cristene soulis. crist seiþ it is werk of mercy to conseile at perti hou a man schal best lyue in þis or þis special poynt. þe fend & his seyn it is mercy & charite to conseile men to holde forþ craftis þat þei vsen aȝenst here conscience & excusen hem bi almes, as masse syngyng & makynge of Instead of giving true advice, the devil's children let a man make up for sin by alms.  
 nedles houses & costly. & whanne clerkis schullen conseile lordis & oþere men hou þei may best *serue* god & saue here soulis in here a-staat, þis conseil is turned in-to worldly wisdom as bildyng of castellis & arraiynge of housholde in lond of pees & of werre. & whanne it [is] reserued to þe holy gost to ȝeue vtterly conseil in special poyntis þat ben not expresly comaundid ne forboden in holy writt, worldly clerkis ful of pride, symonye, coueitise & oþere synnys ȝeuen fulbut conseil aȝenst þe holy gost & aȝenst þe helpe of þe soule for here owene pride & coueitise; & þus conseil of þe holy gost & profit of soulis<sup>1</sup> is putt bihynde & conseil of þe world & þe fleisch & of sathanas is putt forþ. god biddiþ þat lordis & souereyns schulden in resonable manere chastise here sugetis, *seruauntis* & children whanne þei trespassen opynly in word or dede aȝenst goddis comaundementis; þe fend & his techen þat suggettis & *seruauntis* ben cruely beten, pyned, prisoned & sumtyme hangid & drawen for worldly *trespas* & defaute of here \**seruyce* doynge, & vnreuerence aȝenst worldly \*  
 souereyns, but of *trespas* & dispit of god & his lawe no charge but mirþe<sup>2</sup> & lyng & iapyng. worldly *prelati*s of Worldly prelates forbid rulers to punish lechery and perjury.  
 anticrist seyn þat lordis schullen chastise here sugetis of worldly causes, but not of lecherie ne pride ne forsweryng, be it neuere so opyn, for þat longeþ to iurdiccion of *prelati*s; neþeles ȝif þei han money of þes lecherous ȝeues þei schullen lie in here cursed synne fro ȝeer to ȝeer, ȝe be al here lif ȝif sin-rents.

<sup>1</sup> AA begins here, the first part of the tract being lost.<sup>2</sup> myȝe X.

Ill-treatment of  
the poor.

The clergy curse  
those who cannot  
pay tithes, and  
the friars beg  
from those who  
have nothing for  
themselves.

God teaches to  
forgive wrongs  
and ill will ;

the devil teaches  
revenge.

þei paien moche & redily. clerkis seyn þat lordis ben cursed  
ȝif þei chastisen hem, þou; þei ben neuere so foule lecherous  
& neuere so cursed heretikis, for symonye & coueitise &  
meyntenynge of synne & robberyge<sup>1</sup> pore tenauntis bi extor-  
cions for anticristis correccions & veyn halwyng of chirchis  
& auteris & opere iapis. ¶ lord, soone & esely schulde synne  
be hurlid oute of lond ȝif lordis wolden in al here wille, al  
here witt & power dispise synne & synful wrecchis, & preise  
& meyntene vertue & vertuous men; & certis þei ben holden  
her-to vp payne of dampnacion, for ellis þei failen in mercy  
& charite. god techiþ it is mercy to counforten men fallen in  
myschif & disese. þe<sup>2</sup> fend & his techen þat it is almes to  
pursuen men<sup>3</sup> to prisonynge & exilynge whanne þei ben  
brouȝt doun bi sodeyne loos, as brennyng & robberyge, for  
riche men beren hem on honde þat it is for here synne &  
mysreulyng of hem self, & ellis opere broþelis wolden renne  
away wiþ riche mennus good, & þerfore þei schulden be seet  
in strong prison til þei perische for hungur & myschef &  
dispeiren & grucchen aȝenst god; & þus for loue of rotyng dritt  
þei don þat is in hem to dampne many soulis. ȝit worldly  
clerkis cursen for dymes & offryngis, þou; men ben ful pore &  
þei don no þing here offis, & veyn religious cessen not to begge  
& craue of pore men, þou; here rente be bihynde & here  
werk<sup>4</sup> bestis in distresse & wif & childe hungry & nakyd, &  
so þei bryngen hem in-to more myschif & counforten hem not  
but bi lesyngis & fals grauntyng of gostly helpe, þat is not  
in here power but only in goddis<sup>5</sup> delyng. ¶ God techiþ  
þat it is mercy to forȝeue trespassis & wrongis don aȝenst men  
hem self & algatis rancor & ewil wille of herte; þe fend &  
his seyn þat it is manlynesse & riȝtwisnesse & almes to betyn  
gadlyngis & be vengid on hem þat don hem wrong, for ellis  
þeues & lorellis wolden ouerrenne hem & here sugetis wolden  
not drede hem; but comynly þis chastysynge is don bi pride,  
coueitise & out of charite. & þou; lordis & grete men wyunen

<sup>1</sup> robben AA.

<sup>4</sup> wreck X.

<sup>2</sup> omitted X.

<sup>5</sup> of X.

<sup>3</sup> omitted X.

<sup>6</sup> goode X.



herby worldly name & temporal goodis, þei lesen charite & here soule þat ben worþi a þousand \*fold betre þan alle erþely \*[p. 183 MS.] tresour. ¶ God seiþ it is mercy & charite to suffre men mekely & wisly whanne þei ben out of reson as wroþ & malencolious; þe fend & his seyn þat þis is<sup>1</sup> couwardise & leesyng of worldly name & boldyng of euyl doeris; & þerfore for o schrewed word a man mot quyte anoþer or moo, & so of euyl dedis comeþ hate & strif, & fittyng & pledyng be reised & witt & reson & charite exilid, & many men perischid in bodi & soule. god comaundiþ vs to loue oure enemys of oure herte & doo good to men þat hatip<sup>2</sup> vs & preie for men þat pursuen vs wrongfully & falsly; þe deuyl & his seyn þat it is riȝtful to hate oure enemys & don heuyl & harm to hem þat haten vs & falsly pursuen vs, & axe vengauce of oure enemys & false pursueris, for ellis we schullen norische oure enemys in here synne & ouerrenne vs & distroie vs, oure wifis & children & goodis, & þerfore we willen defende vs þe while þat we may. trewe men seyn to þe fend & his disciplis þat ȝif we kepen goddis hestis oure god wole fiȝten for vs & maken oure enemys afferd, & bi oure goode pacience & charite & herty praȝyng for oure enemys<sup>3</sup> þei schulden be goddis grace cesse of here wrong & turne to pees & charite; & þis is liȝttere & betere þan to conquere al þe erþe bi dynt of swerid. & ȝif oure enemys ben endurid in synne, as was pharao, oure godde wolde ordeyne þe beste for vs boþe for body & soule ȝif we kepen mekenesse, pacience & charite; & siþ werris comen to men for synnys let men leue here cursed synne & god of mercy & pees wole ȝeue vs reste & pees of alle erþely enemyes. bi þes cautelis & many moo the fend & his disciplis distroien werkis of mercy & fallen in-to loos of þingis þat þei coueiten mochel & in-to endelis myschefes þat þei wolen to askape, for þei wolen not be reulid bi goddis lawe & reson but bi hire wille, & þerfore alle þingis schal turne aȝenst hem at þe laste.

God bids us love  
our enemies;

the devil says  
that we should  
hate them.

We should trust  
that God will  
fight for us.

<sup>1</sup> omitted X.<sup>2</sup> haten AA.<sup>3</sup> synnys AA.

Capitulum 3<sup>m</sup>.

The devil makes  
our five senses  
means of sin.      ȝit þe fend disceyueþ men bi here fyue wittis & makeþ  
Sight is used by  
the devil to stir up      hem menyng to synne where þei schulden be menyng to vertue  
lust,      &<sup>1</sup> good gouernale of men : first he<sup>2</sup> stiryþ men to seen  
vanyte of þis world & setten here herte þer-onne & forȝeten  
god & his werkis; also he stiryþ men to see faire wymmen,  
& bryngyþ mynde of hem & greet likyng of lecherie in-to  
menneus hertis til þei consenten to synne & fulfillen it in  
dede. ¶ Also whanne men seen lordischipis of þis world &  
precious iuelis & gold & siluer, faire hors & scheep & oþere  
covetousness,      goodis, þe fend stireþ hem to desire hem vnskilfully & sette  
more here herte on hem þan on vertues & blisse of heuene;  
& þanne þei fallen in-to pride & coueitise & oþere synnys.  
\*[p. 184 MS.]      but men schulden see \*goddis werkis, as heuene & erþe, &  
goddis creaturis & herbi knowen þe myȝt, þe wytt & good-  
nesse of þe lord þat made alle þingis of not, & drede hym  
ouer alle þingis & loue him ouer alle creaturis. ¶ Whanne  
Hearing leads  
them to      men schulden here goddis comaundementis & poyntis of  
charite & riȝtwisnesse & treuþe, þe fend stiryþ hem to heren  
lust, slander,      foul speche of lecherie, of bacdytyng of neiȝeboris &  
lesyngis for to haue mynde & likyng of synne & to stire  
hate      men to hate & enuye & pledyng & fyttyng, so þat meke-  
nesse & pacience & charite schullen be lost & cursednesse of  
synne regneþ, þat vnneþe can ony man kepe his tonge fro  
fals & veyn sweryng & schrewid spekyng boþe of lecherie  
and vain swear-  
ing.      & false spekyngis. ¶ Whanne men schullen in spirit smelle  
Smelling      þe swettenesse & þe holynesse of ihū crist & his lif, & smelle  
bi bodily witt þe swettenesse & good odour of herbis & spicis  
& trees & oþere creaturis, to loue god & serue god & herie  
hym for his goodnesse, þe fend stiryþ men to sette here lust  
leads to luxurious  
eating and drink-  
ing.      in smellyng of lekerous metis & drynkis &<sup>3</sup> to take ouer-  
mochil of hem, til þei leesen here wittis & forȝeten god &  
his seruyce & fallen in lecherie & slepen as hooggis, & chiden  
& fytten as woode houndis, & sweren herte & bonys, & cursen

<sup>1</sup> in X.<sup>2</sup> þei X.<sup>3</sup> omitted X.

& warien & prechen opynly cursed lesyngis, & ȝeuen en-  
 saumple of synne as cruel fendis of helle. for bi þis doynge  
 þei blasphemeden god & styren men to synne more spedly þan  
 don many þousand fendis bi hem self. whanne men schulden  
 taste & take mete & drynk in resonable mesure to sustene Taste  
 here lif & labore, & þer-fore þank god & serue hym mekely  
 & wilfully & loue hym hertly, þe fend stirih men to sewe  
 here owene lustis of flesch, to walwe in glotonye & dronke- leads to drunken-  
 nesse as swyn in þe feen, þat þer is neiþer witt ne reson in ness.  
 hem, ne myȝt to goo on þe erþe sumtyme; & to fulfille þis  
 stynkyng glotonye & dronkenes þei seken many stretis  
 & tauernes to seke lekerous morselis & swete drynkis, & Men get drunk  
 borowen oþer mennus catel & payen not aȝen many tymes; on borrowed  
 money.  
 for hereby þei wasten here owene goodis & oþer mennus  
 & comen to pouert & ben casten in prison til þei steruen. &  
 bi þis glotonye & dronkenesse þei wasten here owen bodi &  
 wittis & fallen in-to sikenesse<sup>1</sup> on many maneris & lesen  
 worldly catel & myȝttis of þe soule, as vnderstondynge,  
 mynde & reson, & geten peynes of helle in bodi & soule, but  
 ȝif þei amende hem trewely in þis world. & þe fend techiþ  
 glotonys & dronkelewe men to excuse þis wast on þis  
 manere: "God made alle goode mete & drynke couenable  
 for men schulden spende it & lyue þer-by;" but þei taken  
 non hede of þe mesure ne hou falsly þei lyuen aȝenst goddis  
 lawe, & hou crist & his seyntis tauȝten & vseden abstynence  
 & penaunce, & hou cristene men schulden conquere heuene  
 bi brekyng \*of fleschly lustis, as crist techiþ in þe gospel, & \* [p. 185 MS.]  
 hou crist & poul & petir comaunden vs þat we schullen not 1 Peter ii. 11.  
 fille þe desiris of oure flesch, but as gestis or comelyngis &  
 pilgrimes absteynen hem<sup>2</sup> fro fleschly desires þat fiȝten aȝenst  
 þe soule. & certis þe lesse þat a man spende boþe of mete & Thrift a good  
 drynk & cloþe & alle oþere necessities, so þat he be strong thing.  
 to serue god & do his labour aftir þe staat þat god settiþ him

<sup>1</sup> drynkensis AA.

<sup>2</sup> In AA. 'hem' has been cancelled by underdotting. It should have been corrected to 'us.'

Touch leads to  
lust.

Eccles. xiii. 1.

Prevalence of  
uncleanness.

Jeremiah ix. 21.

inne, so moche þe betre boþe for body & soule & alle oþere men. but hou euere we excusen vs we wasten nedeles moche goode boþe in mete & drynk & cloþis, werbi pore men schulden be holpen & we betre serue god & lesse biȝi aboute þe body & more biȝi aboute god & helþe of oure soulis bi lesse cost & spendynge ȝif we holden goode mesure. ¶ Þe fend disceyueþ men & wymmen bi touchynge of membris ordeyned for genderure of mankynde, & bi kysyng & clippyng is þe fier of lecherie kyndlid & norischid in herte til þe dede sue, & many tymes long custome in<sup>1</sup> þis cursed synne. þerfore seiþ þe wise man, he þat handliþ pich schal be foulid þer-of: þat is men handlynge wymmen & kyssynge hem schullen be blickid wiþ lust of lecherie, oþer in herte oþer in body or ellis in boþe. þerfore ierom & seyntis seyn þat fleynge fro suche companye & abstynence & saad traueile is best medecyne aȝenst lecherie; but þis weiward dalliaunce wiþ wymmen is so comyn þat vnneþe can ony man kepe hym clene, or sengle or weddid or men of ordre of<sup>2</sup> religion. And þus it is verrified þat god seiþ by Jeromye; deþ haþ entrid by þoure wyndowis, þat ben fyue wittes. bi þes queyntises & many moo þe fend disceyueþ men & of instrumentis or<sup>3</sup> menyȝ & armu[r]e of vertue he makij instrumentis or menyȝ & armour of synne. God graunte vs grace to haue mynde on þe peynes þat crist suffrede in his<sup>4</sup> herte, in his hondis & feet, in his heed, in his siȝtte, & herynge, spekyng, smellyng, & tasyng, & in eche place of his bodi fro þe heued to þe sole of þe foot, & to spende alle þe myȝttis of soule & bodi & oure fyue wittis trewely in his seruyce, to seke his worschipe in<sup>5</sup> alle þingis & distroie synne & falsnesse boþe in oure self & oþere men, & to holde & meyntene vertuȝous lif & riȝtwisnesse & pees & charite. Amen.

<sup>1</sup> & X.

<sup>2</sup> and AA.

<sup>3</sup> of X.

<sup>4</sup> omitted X.

<sup>5</sup> & X.

## XIV.

HOW RELIGIOUS MEN SHOULD KEEP CERTAIN  
ARTICLES.

I SEE nothing in this tract to give us any certainty as to its authorship. It is simply an enumeration of the faults charged against the religious orders, thrown into the form of a wish that they may be avoided.

The special points for notice are the mention of astronomy among the subjects taught in the religious schools (No. 39), and the complaint that the friars were "too homely with gentlewomen by colour of physic" (No. 38), (cf. Prof. Brewer's preface to *Monumenta Franciscana*, pp. xliii-xlvi). The same charge is made in the tract *Of the Leaven of Pharisees*. The abuse of bishoprics *in partibus infidelium* conferred on men who only desire episcopal orders for the profit to be made of them at home (No. 40) is, I think, mentioned nowhere else in this volume. It is attacked in the Great Sentence of Curse (S.E.W. III. 300).

We may see from No. 42 the kind of retort made by the friars on the poor preachers.

The only indication of date is in No. 26, where we learn that one of the points of the poor preachers was the application of the prophecies of Antichrist to the Pope. The preachers are not likely to have begun with arguments of this kind. Still we cannot lay much stress on this argument; such use of prophecy had long been familiar to the Fraticelli.

Copied from the Corpus MS. X. and collated with the Dublin MS. AA.  
I have omitted the usual summary as useless with a mere list like this.

How religious men shoulde kepe certayne Articles.<sup>1</sup>

- I.<sup>2</sup> Cristene men preien mekely & deuoutly to almyȝtty god þat he graunte his grace for his hendeles mercy to oure religious, boþe possessioneris & mendynauntis, þat þei assenten to þis fewe treuþis. ¶ First, þat þei louen more heuenly þingis þan worldly þat soone schullen passe. þe
- II. secunde, þat þei setten more pris & deynte bi goddis comaundementis þan bi tradicions maad \*of here owene synful hedis.<sup>3</sup>
- III. ¶ þe þridde, þat þei holden in herte, in word, & dede þat þe noble religion maad of ihu<sup>4</sup> crist for prestis in here clennesses & fredom is more þerfit þan ony newe<sup>5</sup> religion maad of synful men þat ofte erreden in þouȝt, word & dede. ¶ þe firþe, þat þei chargen more sixtene condicions of charite þan here bodely abite. ¶ þe fiftē, þat þei loue more pouert of þe gospel, to whiche þei ben bounden bi here owene reule & profession, þan richesse of þe world, þat ben clepid drit bi seynt þoul in holy writt, for which richessis þei make ofte sacrifice to fendis & honouren false goddis as seynt þoul seiþ. ¶ þe sixte, þat þei loue more resonable abstynence þan glotonye, wombe ioie & ydelnesse. ¶ þe seuēþe, þat þei loue more þe treuþe of holy writt þan ypocrisie & lesyngis of þe fend. ¶ þe eȝte, þat þei loue more þe honour of god & saluacion of mennus soulis þan here owen worldly pride & veyn glorie & singuler profit. ¶ þe neyenþe, þat þei setten more prise bi þe most riȝtful & most profitable ordynaunce<sup>6</sup> of god,<sup>7</sup> boþe for clerkis, lordis & comunys, þan bi þe wrongful & vnwitty ordynaunce of synful men þat harmen alle þes þre. ¶ þe tenþe, þat þei louen more & kepen betre þe most witti reulis of ihu crist þan þe
- IV. 1 Cor. xiii. 4.
- V. Religious men should love poverty. Phil. iii. 8.
- Col. iii. 5. VI. Temperance.
- VII.
- VIII.
- IX. Keeping God's laws more than man's.
- X.

<sup>1</sup> The title in AA. is "Hou men of priuat religious schulden loue more þe gospel, goddis heate and his ordynaunce þan ony newe lawis, newe reulis and custumes and ordynauncis of synful men." The title given above is inserted in X by a later hand; having been omitted by the scribe. I have left the shorter title for its greater convenience.

<sup>2</sup> The numbers at the side are only in AA.

<sup>4</sup> omitted X.

<sup>5</sup> dedis X.

<sup>6</sup> rewe X.

<sup>7</sup> omitted X.

vnwitti constitucions of synful & worldly men. ¶ þe ellenenþe, xi.  
 þat þei magnyfien more obediences maad to god in cristendom  
 takynge biforme of þe gospel þan newe obedience maad  
 singularly to a synful man, þat is not comaundid of god  
 neiþer ensaumplid of ihū crist & his apostlis but don of here  
 owene synguler ordynaunce. ¶ þe twelþe, þat noman be xii.  
 dispised ne ponynschid for good lyuynge in suynge ihū cristis  
 steppis bi forme of þe gospel. ¶ þe þrittenþe, þat þei studie xiii.  
 & kepe more þe fredom & priuylegies grauntid of ihū crist  
 in þe gospel þan wrongful priueleges grauntid of synful  
 men, bi whiche boþe pride & coueitise & þeste & wrongis  
 ben meyntened many tymes. ¶ þe fourtenþe, þat þei ben xiv.  
 verreyly dede to pompe & pride & coueitise of þe world & to <sup>Deadness to the</sup>  
 glotonye & to fleschly synnes, & not ded fro nedful traueile <sup>world.</sup>  
 & profitenge to oþere men vp þe ȝiftis þat god<sup>1</sup> haþ ȝouen  
 hym. ¶ þe fiftenþe, þat þei ben not goddis maistris, to dwelle xv.  
 euermore in o place & o manere of lif at here owene lust,  
 but frely & wilfully aftir goddis ȝiftis traueilen & dwelle þer  
 þat it<sup>2</sup> is most worschipful to god & most nedful & profitable  
 to cristene soulis. ¶ þe sextenþe, þat þei ben verrey bokis & xvi.  
 myrroures of mekenesse, wilful pouert & of besi traueile in  
 goddis cause & holynesse to alle men in þe world, & not bok  
 or myrroure of \*pride, of coueitise, of ydelnesse & worldly lif • [p. 187 MS.]  
 to drawe worldly men<sup>3</sup> in-to coueitise & oþere synnys & at  
 here laste to helle. þe seuentenþe, þat þei drawen not noble xvii.  
 bokis of holy writt & holy doctouris & oþere nedeful sciencis  
 fro curatis & clerkis in-to here owene cloistris, þat ben as  
 castellis or paleicis of kyngis & emperouris, & suffre hem be <sup>Not to monopo-</sup>  
 closed þere & waxe rotyn, & neiþer ȝeue hem ne lene hem <sup>lise books that</sup>  
 ne selle hem to curatis & clerkis, þat myȝten, couden & <sup>they do not use.</sup>  
 wolden lerne holy writt & teche it frely for loue of mennus  
 soulis. þe eiȝtenþe, þat þei louen more comyn profit of cristene xviii.  
 men, boþe gostly & bodily, þan here synguler worldly profit  
 & here owene bodily ayse & welfare. þe neyntenþe, þat þei xix.

<sup>1</sup> omitted X.<sup>2</sup> omitted X.<sup>3</sup> omitted X.

- Not to promote  
dissension by  
multiplying  
sects. make not discencion ne gendre strif ne enuye among cristene  
men bi multipliynge of newe sectis, newe abitis & newe bi-  
lawis, But drawe to vnyte & charite, as þer is o god, o  
bileue, & o cristendom. þe twentiethe, þat þei suffre not pore  
men to be oppressid bi taxis & oþere chargis more þan þei  
may wel bere, þe while þat þei han plente of riches & grete  
wast iuelis to purchase londis & lordischipis & bilde grete  
waste houses, siþ alle here goodis ben pore mennus goodis,  
& þei ben but spenderis or keperis of þe goodis & procura-  
touris of pore men, as seynt ierom & þe lawe of þe chirche  
witnessen. þe on and twentiethe, þat þei conforten not riche  
men in here false lif, & stoppe not restitution to be maad to  
pore men bi sikyrnesse of here perpetual preiere, whanne þei  
witten not where here preiere be worþ o ferþing. þe two  
& twentiethe, þat þei make not comyns so pore bi sotil  
ypocrisie of gredy beggyng & trentalis, to make grete festis  
& waste housynge, þat þe comyns may not forþe to paie here  
tribut to þe kyng & rentis to lordis & dymes & offrynges to  
curatis. þe þre & twenþe, þat in alle þingis þei ben bisi to  
seke goddis worschipe & loue hym & his lawe & holde no  
custome ne tradicion þat hyndriþ hem<sup>1</sup> to serue god, but take  
goode customes in as moche as þei helpen hem to kepe goddis  
hestis & no more, for lif ne for deþ. god brynge hem to þis  
charite. þe foure & twentiethe, þat þei hiren not grete men  
bi gold fees & robees & false gostly helpe to be goddis  
traitouris, holdynge aȝenst his lawe & his ordynaunce to  
magnifye anticristis clerkis & synful mennus ordynaunce.  
þe fyue & twentiethe, þat þei quenche not þe ȝiftis of god &  
so þe holy gost as moche as is in hem, lettyng trewe  
prechyng of þe gospel, laste here pride, coueitise & ypocrisie  
be knowen. þe sixe<sup>2</sup> & twentiethe, \*þat þei pursuen not crist  
in his membris for trewe prechyng of holy writt & trewe  
schewynge of synne to þe peple, & of anticrist & his clerkis,  
bi prophecie of ihū crist & his apostlis, pleyndly tauȝt &
- XX.  
XXI.  
XXII.  
XXIII.  
XXIV.  
XXV.  
XXVI.
- Not to waste the  
money of the poor  
on building great  
houses.  
Jerome.  
Not to stop resti-  
tution by leading  
men to rely on  
prayers which  
may be worth not  
a farthing.  
Not to be greedy  
in begging.  
Not to bribe  
great men to  
uphold them in  
wrong.  
\* [p. 188 MS.]  
Not to persecute  
true preachers.

<sup>1</sup> hym X.<sup>2</sup> siþe X.



comaundid of god to be tauȝt trewely & opynly to his peple.  
 þe seuene & twentiþe, þat þei blyndyn not þe kyng & lordis **XXVII.**  
 bi ypocrisie & false lesyngis to meyntene wrong ordynaunce  
 of synful men for pride & coueitise, aȝenst goddis lawe & here  
 owene profit & helpe of þe comyns. þe eiȝte & twentiþe, **XXVIII.**  
 þat þei approprien not parische chirchis to ouer riche houses Not to appropriate parish churches and put in incompetent curates.  
 bi false sugestions & symonye, & putten þere an ydiot, &  
 ȝeuen hym to litel liflode & taken alle þe profite to hem self,  
 & letten goode curatis of here liflode & trewe techynge of  
 cristene peple & helpe of pore men in<sup>1</sup> parischis & goddis  
 seruyce & holdynge vp of þe chirchis in hilynge & bokis &  
 oþere ornamentis. þe nyne and twentiþe, þat þei procuren not **XXIX.**  
 children to here religion bi sikyrnesse of worldly lordschipe Not to seduce children into their order by ill means.  
 & wombe ioie & ydelnesse, & þanne make hem bi profession  
 bynde hem to grett pouert & to be dede to worldly myrþe &  
 likynge; siþ þo þat comen more to þes religious for pride,  
 coueitise, sikyrnesse of bodily welfare þan for loue of meke-  
 nesse to lyue in pouert & discret abstynence & penaunce, ben  
 cursed & symonyentis in þe entre. þe þrittiþe, þat þes **XXX.**  
 mendynauntis disceyuen not children bi lesyngis & ypocrisie  
 & biheste of worldly honour & welfare as wel as gret prelatis  
 & bischopis to come & lyue herby in here priuat secte,  
 preisyng it more þan þe noble & free religion maad & kept  
 of ihū crist & his apostlis. þe on & þrittiþe, þat þei stelen **XXXI.**  
 not riche mennus children & pore, & leden hem to ferre Not to kidnap children.  
 contres fro here frendis & holde hem cloos til þei ben professid  
 aȝenst here wille, & þan suffre hem not to goo out þouȝ þei  
 ben vnable to kepe þis religion; siþ þei sillen in a manere  
 þes children to þis priuat ordre for worschipe & worldly  
 wynnyng & constreyne hem to here dampnacion. þe two **XXXII.**  
 & þrittiþe, þat þei sende not gold out of þe rewme in-to Not to send money out of the kingdom to buy dispensations from their rule.  
 aliens hondis for to gete priuylegies & dispensacions aȝenst  
 þe<sup>2</sup> poyntis of here reule ȝif it be resonable & profitable, &  
 ȝif it be vnresonable & vnprofitable late no man bynde hym

<sup>1</sup> & X.<sup>2</sup> omitted AA.

- þer-to*; But lyue frely vnder clene religion þat crist maade in whiche may noon error be. þe þre & þrittiþe, þat, siþ þei preisen so mochil obedience maad to man, þat þei ben not exempt fro obedience to bischopis & to þe comyn lawe boþe of þe chirche & of þe lond. þe foure & þrittiþe, þat þei þeuen not a pencion of moche gold to þe pope for to be exempt fro visitacions of bischopis & iust correccion, siþ þei holden \*mannus obedience so medful, last herby þei waxen rotyn in synne & þe ordynaries doren not amende hem bi forme of þe gospel for þes weiward exempciens, siþ robert grosted clepiþ siche exempcion þe deuelis nettis. ¶ þe fyue & þrittiþe, siþ it is a grete sentence of þe chirche þat who euere doþ aȝenst þe riȝtful wille of a dede man is cursed, late it be enquired where þes religious, myspeyndynge here goodis in pompe & worldly ples & newe purchasyng, & leuyng þe noumbre of prestis & helpynge of pore men, aȝenst here foundouris wille, & getynge priuylegies & dispensynge aȝenst here reulis maad of holy men as þei seyn, where þei ben cursed or not; & ȝif þei ben late alle men helpe & make hem kepe þe friste riȝtful wille of here<sup>1</sup> foundour & patron. þe sixe & þrittiþe, þat þei make not enuye, strif & plee bitwixe curatis & hem and<sup>2</sup> bitwixe curatis & here sugetis for here priueleygies of confession & sepulture & mortuaries & false lesyngis makynge. þe seuene & þrittiþe, þat þei norischen not men & wommen in lecherie, in wrong disceit of fals chaffaryng & extorcion doynge, lettyng verrey restitution of euyl gotten goodis & þe schame of grete synneris ȝif þei were schryue at here owene curatis, for to haue þat<sup>3</sup> of þis<sup>3</sup> robberie, & make worldly festis & wast houses aȝenst here pouert & profession, bi colour of trentalis & longe preieris in sixte of men. þe eiȝte & þrittiþe, þat þei ben not in lordis courtis reuleris of here householdis & worldly officis, & to homly wiþ gentil wymmen bi colour of fisik, for drede of sclaundryng & mysdoynge, siþ þei lyuen in reste &
- XXXIII. That they should be subject to the bishops and the law.
- XXXIV. Nor buy exemptions from the pope.
- [p. 189 MS.]
- Grosted. XXXV.
- That they should be made to keep their founder's will.
- XXXVI. Not to make quarrels between curates and their parishioners.
- XXXVII.
- XXXVIII. Not to get into ladies' company under pretence of doctoring.

<sup>1</sup> omitted X.<sup>2</sup> omitted X.<sup>3</sup> his X.

welfare of body & ben yonge & stronge of complexion, & sathanas is redi to tempte hem. ¶ þe nyne & þrittiþe, þat **XXXIX.** þei studien bisily holy writt & techen it more þan veyn To study holy writ rather than sophistrie & astronomye & more þan þe popis decretalis & astronomy. fablis & cronyelis; siþ þat it<sup>1</sup> is best & most nedeful & þei han grete wittes of kynde & grete leiser to studien þus. þe fortijþe, þat þei ben not maad bischopis of heþene men & **XL.** sweren to goo þider & conuerte hem, & þanne meyntened Bishops & partibus. to be suffragans & sellen sacramentis & robben þe peple & maken hem haue goddis curs for here money. þe on & **XLI.** fourtiþe, þat þes newe religious blasphememen not god in Not to excommunicate those who withdraw from their order. holdyng a prest of here ordre apostata & cursed iif he lyue among cristene peple where he haþ resonable euydence to profit most bi good ensaumple of holy lif & trewe & free prechyng wiþ-oute flateryng & beggyng & lesyngis sewyng. ¶ þe two & fourtiþe, þat þei blasphememen not god, **XLII.** takyng vp-on hem self knowyng approprid to god, þat þis Not to pretend to knowledge which God has kept to himself. [p. 190 MS.] prest coueitþ fredom of þe \*gospel for his eise & lustis in synne of bodi; þat þis child schal betre serue god in þis newe ordre than in clene ordre þat crist maade; þat it is betre to begge of pore men & do aftir o foolis styryng þan do mercy to cristene soulis aftir styryng of god. þe þre & **XLIII.** fourtiþe, þat þei preise not more obedience to synful men bi Not to set the rules of their order above family ties. synguler profession, not ensaumplid<sup>2</sup> of crist & his apostlis, þan medful obedience of children to fadir & modir & of seruauantis to here lordis & maistris; siþ god techiþ & comaunde þis obedience & þe merit þer-of, last mannis folie be heiþed more þan goddis ordynaunce. þe laste, þat alle clerkis **XLIV.** of religion & oþere examynen wel whiche is þe beste ordre for prestis, where it be possessioneris ordre or mendynauntis or ellis þe mene þat crist made & kepte & his apostlis alle; þat is presthod bi fredom & clemesse of cristis reule in þe gospel. & late alle prestis kepe þe beste & leue þe lesse profit. god for his<sup>3</sup> endeles mercy bryng alle prestis her-to & make lordis & comyns to constreyne hem to þis. Amen.

<sup>1</sup> omitted AA.<sup>2</sup> ensaumplis in both MSS.<sup>3</sup> omitted X.

## XV.

## OF SERVANTS AND LORDS.

I HAVE little doubt of the authenticity of this tract, or of the date to which we ought to assign it. It was written soon after the Wat Tyler riots, when Wyclif and his followers were discredited by a supposed complicity with John Ball (cf. Wals. II. 33). The indignant disclaiming of Socialist doctrine is fearlessly combined with denunciation of the oppressions committed by the rich. The complaint that "lords strive with their tenants to bring them into thralldom more than they should by reason and charity" (p. 234), is a proof, if one were needed, of the kind of injustice which led to the revolt. The author had lived among the poor and been an eye-witness of oppression, or he would not have insisted with such force on the need of the lord's presence to control the extortions of his steward (p. 240), nor should we have had the touch of the white (tally) sticks, which the poor were made to accept for their goods (p. 233).

The distinction between refusing tithes to wicked priests and withholding dues from wicked lords or creditors, is clearly stated on pp. 229-230.

Copied from the Corpus MS. X. and collated with the Dublin MS. AA.

## SUMMARY.

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Of *seruauntis* & lordis hou eche schal kepe his degree.

First, *seruauntis* schullen trewely & gladly *serue* to here Duty of servants.  
 lordis or maistris & not be fals ne idel ne grucchyng ne  
 heuey in here *seruyce* doynge, but holde hem paied of þe  
 staat of *seruauntis*, in whiche god haþ ordeyned hem for here  
 beste to holde hem in mekenesse aȝenst pride, & besi *traueile*  
 aȝenst ydelnesse & slouþe. for seynt poul biddiþ þat ȝif þou 1 Cor. vii. [21.]  
 be clepid a *seruaunt*, recke þou not þer-of; þat is to seiþe be  
 not grucchyng ne heuy þerfore. ¶ Also poul techiþ þus: “ȝe Ephes. vi. [5.]  
*seruauntis* obeische to fleschly lordis wiþ drede & quakyng  
 or tremelyng, in sympilnesse of ȝoure herte, as to crist; not  
*seruyng* at þe eiȝe, as plesyng to men, but as *seruauntis* of  
 crist, doynge þe wille of god of herte, wiþ goode wille  
*seruyng* as to þe lord of alle lordis & not to men; wityng  
 þat eche man what euere good þing he do schal resceyue þat  
 of þe lord, be he *seruaunt* or bonde or free man;” þat is to  
 seiþe reward of god for þat good doynge. ¶ Also poul techiþ Col. iii. [22.]  
 þus *seruauntis*; “obeche, ȝe *seruauntis*, bi alle þingis to fleschly  
 lordis. what þing euere ȝe don worche ȝe of herte, þat is  
 wisdom & wille, as to þe lord & not to men, wityng þat of  
 þe lord ȝe<sup>1</sup> schulle take<sup>2</sup> retribucion, þat is mede or reward,  
 of heritage in heuene. *serue* ȝe to þe lord crist; for who þat  
 doþ wrong or iniurye schal resceyue þat þing þat he haþ  
 wickydly don, & anemptis god is not accepcion or takyng  
 of personys.” þat is o man schal not be sparid in goddis dom  
 for his richessis or lordschipis or heiȝ blood, & a pore man  
 be ponyschid for a litel trespas, as men don in þis wickid  
 world, but eche man schal be ponyschid after his owene gilte,  
 & \*eche man rewardid after his owene goode lif. but here þe [p. 191 MS.]  
 fend moueþ summe men to seiþe þat cristene men schullen not False Socialist  
 be *seruauntis* or þrallis to heþene lordis, siþ þei ben false to teachers.  
 god & lasse worþy þan cristene men; neiþer to cristene lordis,  
 for þei ben breþeren in kynde, & ihū crist bouȝte cristene

<sup>1</sup> he X.

<sup>2</sup> omitted X.

- men on þe crois & made hem fre; but aȝenst þis heresie poul writiþ þus in<sup>1</sup> goddis lawe: "what kynne *seruauntis* ben vnder þook of *seruage* deme þei here lordis worþi alle manere honour or worschipe, þat þe name & techynge of þe lord be not blasphemyd," þat is, holden wrongful & dispised; & þis word is vnderstonen of heþene lordis. "but þo *seruauntis* þat han trewe or cristene lordis, dispise þei not to *serue* hem for þat þei ben breþeren boþe in kynde & in feiþ, but more *serue* þei for þe lordis ben cristene & louyd, þe whiche ben partyneris of good dede. teche þou þes þingis," seiþ poul to bishop thymothe, "boþe to men þat ben vnlerned, And stire men þat ben lerned & necligent in doynge. ȝif ony man techiþ oþer wise, & accordiþ not to þe hoole wordis of oure lord ihū crist & to þat lore þat is after pitee, he is proude, no þing kunnyng, but weilyng or languyschyng aboute questionis & fittyng of wordis, of whiche ben gendred enuyes<sup>2</sup> st[r]yues & blasphemis, þat ben dispisyngis of god, euyl suspescions & fittyngis to-gedre of men þat ben corrupt in herte or soule, þat ben priued fro treuþe." ¶ Also poul techiþ þat generally cristene men & wymmen schullen be so holy of lif, þat men out of bileue be aschamed & haue noon euyl to seie of cristene men, & chargiþ *seruauntis* to be suget, or vnderlout,<sup>3</sup> to here lordis, & plesynge in alle þingis, & not aȝen seiynge, not doynge fraude, but in alle þingis schewynge good feiþ or fidelite or treuþe, to worschipe, or to make fair in alle þingis þe techynge of god oure saueur.
- 1 Peter iii. [16.] And þerfore techiþ petir þat cristene men schullen haue so good conscience & so good lif þat enemys of oure feiþ þat bakbiten or myspeken of vs ben confounded, & also þei þat falsly chalengen oure goode lif in crist be stoppid; & petir
- 1 Peter ii. [12.] spekiþ more pleynly of þis matir, & comaundiþ cristene men to haue goode lyuynge amonge heþene men, þat in þat þing þat þei myspeken of vs, as of mysdoeris, þat þei beholden & see vs of oure goode werkis, & glorifie god in þe tyme of

<sup>1</sup> & X.<sup>2</sup> enemies X.<sup>3</sup> under lout X.

visitacion. ¶ But þit summe men þat ben out of charite Somemen impute these Socialist teachings to poor priests. sclaudren pore prestis wiþ þis error, þat seruauntis or tenauntis may lawefully wiþholde rentis & seruyce<sup>1</sup> fro here lordis whanne lordis ben opynly wickid in here lyuynge. & þei maken þis false \*lesyngis vpon pore prestis to make lordis \*[p. 192 MS.] to hate hem, & not to meyntene treuþe of goddis lawe þat þei techen opynly for worschipe of god & profit of<sup>2</sup> þe reume and stablynge of þe kyngis pouer &<sup>3</sup> distroynge of synne. for þes pore prestis distroien most bi goddis lawe rebelte of seruauntis aȝenst lordis, & charge seruauntis to be suget þou; lordis bi tirauntis, for seynt petir techiþ þus: "Be ye ser- <sup>1</sup> Peter ii. [18.] uauntis suget to lordis in alle manere of<sup>4</sup> drede, not only to goode lordis & bonere,<sup>5</sup> but also to tirauntis, or siche þat drawen fro goddis scole." for, as seynt poul seiþ, eche Romans xiii. [1.] man owiþ to be suget to heizere potestatis, þat is to men of heize power, for þer is no power but of god; & so he þat aȝenstondiþ power, stondiþ aȝenst þe ordynauce of god; but þei þat aȝenstonden geten to hem self dampnacion. & þerfore poul biddiþ þat we be suget to princes bi nede, & not only for wrapþe but also for conscience; & þerfore we paien tributis to princis, for þei ben mynystis of god; & poul biddiþ vs paie dettis to alle men, tribut to hym þat we owen tribut, & so of taliage for þingis boren aboute in lond, & so drede & also worschipe or honour. & þus seruauntis schulden trewely & wilfully seruē lordis & here maistris, & lyue in reste, pees & charite, & stire lordis, þou; þei weren heȝene lordis, to good cristene feiþ & holy lif bi here pacience & opyn trewe lif & meke. & þis is a feyned word of anticristis clerkis þat, ȝif sugetis may leffully wiþdrawe tiþes & offryngis To withdraw rents is not the same as to withdraw tithes. fro curatis þat openly lyuen in lecherie or grete oþere synnes & don not here office, þan seruauntis & tenauntis may wiþdrawe here seruyce & rentis fro here lordis þat lyuen opynly a cursed lif. for to þe first sugetis han þe auctorite of goddis lawe & mannes lawe also, but not to wiþdrawe

<sup>1</sup> seruyces AA.    <sup>2</sup> on X.    <sup>3</sup> in X.    <sup>4</sup> omitted AA.    <sup>5</sup> honoure X.

- seruyce* & *rentis* fro wickid lordis; but ben chargid of god bi petir & poul to be þus suget to wickid lordis; & þerfore
- Matt. xvii. [27.] crist paiede for hym & his apostlis tribut to þe heþene emperour. & we reden not þat he or ony apostle paide tipes to þe wickid heiþe prestis after tyme þat he began to preche.
- Rom. xiii. [1-7.] ¶ Also lordis han power of mennus bodies & catel in resonable maner, & temperale swerd & worldly power bi goddis lawe to compelle men to do here *seruyce* & paie *rentis*, but bi þe gospel & cristis lif & his apostlis, prestis han not siche power to constreyn men to paie hem dymes, & principally whanne þei don not here gostly office, but harmen here sugetis in fals techynge & euyl ensaumple of lif. but þou; þei deden wele here office & men wolden not paie dymes, þei schulden suffren
- Luke ix. [55.] mekely & not curse, as ihū crist dide.
- The duty of lords. See we now hou lordis schulden lyue in here astaat. first,
- \*[p. 193 MS.] þei \*schulden knowe goddis lawe & studie it & meyntene it, & distroie wrong & meyntene pore men in here riȝt to lyue in reste, pees & charite, & suffre no<sup>1</sup> men vnder colour of hem to do extorcions, bete men, & holde pore men out of riȝt bi strengþe of lordischipis. ¶ For þus spekiþ holy writt in þe
- Deut. xvii. [16.] fift<sup>e</sup> bok of goddis lawe; "whanne þe kyng is ordeyned bi þe chesyng of god & of his peple, he schal not multiplie to hym self many hors, he schal not haue many wyues to drawe his herte to lustis, & he schal not haue oute of mesure grete weiȝttis of siluer & gold, but after þat he schal sitte in sege of his regne, he schal writte to him þe bok of goddis lawe in a volym, takynge ensaumplerie of prestis of þe kynrede of leuy, & haue it wiþ him, & he schal rede þat alle þe daies of his lif, þat he kunne drede þe lord his god & kepe his wordis, þe whiche ben comaundid in þe lawe, & his herte schal not be lift vp in-to pride vpon his breþeren, & he schal not croke in-to þe riȝte side ne in-to þe left side, þat he & his children regne long tyme vpon Israel." ¶ Also kyngis &
- To seek wisdom. lordis schulde axe of god, bi gret desir & holy lif, wisdom of

<sup>1</sup> not X.<sup>2</sup> first AA.



heuenely þingis & kunnynges of erþely þingis to reule goddis  
 peple bi, & not richessis, ne worldly substaunces,<sup>1</sup> ne worldly  
 glorie, ne vnreasonable vengaunces of here enemys, ne long  
 lif in þis world, as kyng samon<sup>2</sup> dede, & þerfore god þat him  
 wisdom of heuenely þingis & of erþely þingis & richessis &  
 substaunce & glorie, þat neuere kyng bi-fore hadde so moche  
 ne aftir. ¶ Also so<sup>3</sup> kyngis & lordis schulden be cloþid wiþ Job xxix. [14, etc.]  
 riȝtwisnesse & riȝtful dom as wiþ a diademe, & be eiȝe to a  
 blynd man & foot to þe crokid or haltynges, & be fadir of  
 pore men, & wiþ most diligencē sike þe cause þat þei knowe  
 not, & defoule & distroie þe power of a wickid man, & take  
 a-wey þe prey out of his teef; & whanne þei sitten as kyngis<sup>4</sup>  
 & compaynes stonden aboute þei schulden [be] confortours  
 of mornynge men & men ful of myscheyf, & delyuere pore  
 men crynges, & fadirles children & moderles þat han noon  
 helpe, & so haue blyssynge of him þat was in poynt to  
 perische, & conforte þe widwis herte. þes goodnessis & many  
 moo vsed þe holy kyng iob, & ben in holy writt for ensaunple  
 of kyngis & lordis. Also god him self seiþ bi ieromye þat Jerem. xxii. 3. 5.  
 he schal take vengaunce on hem þat demeden not riȝthfully  
 þe cause<sup>5</sup> of widwe, þe cause of fadirles & modirles, & þe cause  
 of pore men. Also god hym self seiþ<sup>6</sup> by ysaie, þat princes Isaiah i. [16.]  
 schullen cesse to don euele & lerne to do wel, & seke dom,  
 & helpe men oppressid wrongly, & ȝeue dom to fadirles &  
 modirles, & meyntene þe widwe, & come & reproue him; þat  
 is to seiȝe, but ȝif he þan helpe hem. & þerfore seiþ holy writt Prov. xx. [28.]  
 þat mercy & trowþe kept of kyngis, & his trone is maade  
 strong bi mekenesse \* & mercy, & þe kyng þat sittith in sete of [p. 194 MS.]  
 dom distroieþ alle euyl in his lokynge, & so it plesith more to Prov. xx. 8.  
 god to do mercy & dom þan to do sacrifices; & þus salamon Prov. xxv. 5.  
 seiþ, þat þei þat don wickedly ben abhominable to þe kyng,  
 for his sete is maade stable bi riȝtwisnesse; & þus seiþ dauid, Psalm xcix. 4.  
 þat þe honour of þe kyng loueþ dom; & for þe riȝtful & witti  
 dom þat salamon dide bitwixen tweie comyn wymmen, alle

<sup>1</sup> sustenaunces X.<sup>2</sup> salamon AA.<sup>3</sup> omitted X.<sup>4</sup> lyngis X.<sup>5</sup> omitted X.<sup>6</sup> omitted X.

- Rom. xlii. [3.] þe lond of israel drede hym. & þerfore techiþ poul þat princes ben not to drede of good werk but of euyl, & a man sette in grete power beriþ not wiþ-oute grete cause þe swerd, þat is worldly power, for he is a mynystre of god to do vengauunce to him þat doþ euyle. & seynt petir techiþ generally cristene men to be suget to eche man for god, & to þe kyng as to souereyn bifore oþere, & to dukis as seynt of þe kyng<sup>1</sup> to vengauunce of mysdedis or mysdoeris & to preisyng<sup>2</sup> of goode dedis or goode doeris. ¶ Also poul techiþ lordis þus: “þe lordis, ȝoue to seruauantis þat þing þat is riȝtful & equite & euene, witynge þat ȝe also han a lord in heuene.”
- Col. iv. [1.] also poul seiþ in a-pistel of ephesyns: “& ȝe lordis, do to seruauantis þe same þingis, þat is goode riȝtwisnesse & equyte of herte, & wiþ goode wille, forȝeuynge manasse; witynge þat boþe ȝoure lord & hern is in heuene, &<sup>3</sup> accepcioun<sup>4</sup> of persones is not anemptis god;” þat is, god sparet not for richesse ne lordischeipe ne worldly frendischeipe to ponysche synnes, & sparet not for pouerte to rewarde good lyuynge of pore seruauantis.

¶ Siþ þis is þe office of kyngis & lordis, to venge þus synnys & to preise & rewarde goode dedis, ȝif lordis leuen þis office, & meyn-tenen synful men & wrong doeris, & helpen not pore men in here riȝt, þei may drede þat here kyngdom & lordischipe schullen be translated in-to anoþer folk, as þe wyse man seiþ: “a kyngdom is<sup>5</sup> translated from o peple in-to anoþer for vnriȝtwisnesse, & iniuries or wrongis, & contekis or debatis, & for dyuerse giles or disceitis.” for men dreden<sup>6</sup> þat vnriȝtwisnesse aȝenst god regneþ in oure lond; for men dreden more to displese an erþely dedly wrecche for lesynge of worldly frendischeipe þan to displese god almyȝty & to lese his moste blissed frendischeipe; & loue more to performe a wrong comaundement of proude luciferis children þan to performe þe moste riȝtful comaundement of god, þat is esy & sikirere; & louen more a litel stynkyng drit of worldly goodis þan þei louen þe blisse of

<sup>1</sup> lyng X.<sup>4</sup> excepcion X.<sup>2</sup> preiynge X.<sup>5</sup> omitted AA.<sup>3</sup> in X.<sup>6</sup> dredem X.

heuene; for many men maken hem more bisy to geten worldly muk þan to geten vertues & holy lif, & maken more sorowe whanne þei fallen fro worldly catel in-to pouerte þan whanne þei fallyn fro grace & charite & oþere vertues in-to many orble<sup>1</sup> synnys. Also men \*louen more to venge wrongis & dispites don to here owene personys or lordischipis þan to venge wronggis or dispitis don aȝenst þe mageste of god almyȝtȝ; as ȝif a man speke a word of litel reprof or vilonye of a lord or a grete man of þis world he schal be pursued & peyned þerfore þat alle þe world or many men schullen wondere vpon hym, but ȝif men speken falsnesse bi oure god, seiynge þat crist beggede<sup>2</sup> as men don now nedles, or dispisen Friars. his name bi cursid swerynge, or speken vilonye of lecherie Swearing. or of oþere foule synnys to foule cristene soulis þerbi, þei ben not pursued ne hurlid out, but chirischid & holde goode felawis, & summe ȝit ben holden holy men, for goddis lawe is not knowen & here ypocrisie is ȝit hid, & þus vnriȝtwisnesse regneþ vpon many sidis.

iniuries or wrongis ben don to pore men many weies; Wrongs of poor men. for prelatis techen hem not treuely goddis lawe, neiþer in word ne ensauple of holy lif, & ȝit þei cursen faste for here dymes & offryngis of pore men, whanne þei schulden rapere ȝeue hem worldly goodis þan take of hem; for prelatis wasten in pride, glotonye,<sup>3</sup> worldly ples Wickedness of prelates. & grete festis of lordis and riche men þe tresor of pore men, þe while þei ben in moche peyne & wrecchidnesse in bodi & soule; & ȝit prelatis wolen not do sacramentis & here gostly office to here sugetis, as halwyng of chirchis and auteris & chircheȝerdis & oþere ornamentis, but<sup>4</sup> ȝif men bien hem for moche money; & þanne comynly þe biere & þe sellere ben cursed of god. also lordis many tymes don wrongis to pore men bi extorseions & vnresonable mercymentis & vnresonable taxis, & taken pore mennus goodis Lords do wrong to the poor. & paien not þerfore but white stickis, & dispisen hem & Take their goods and pay them with tally-sticks.

<sup>1</sup> horrible AA.<sup>2</sup> gloterie AA. and so generally through the tract.<sup>3</sup> begges X.<sup>4</sup> omitted X.

manassen hem & sumtyme beten hem whanne þei axen here peye. & þus lordis deuouren pore mennus goodis in glotonye & wast & pride, & þei perischen for myschief, &<sup>1</sup> hungur & þrist & colde, & þere children also; & if here rente be not redily paid here bestis ben stressid & þei þursued wipouten mercy, þouȝ þei be neuere so pore & nedi & ouerchargid wip age, febilnesse & loos of catel & wip many children. & if lordis wolen not mekely here a pore mannus cause & helpe hym in his riȝte, but suffre sisouris of contre to distroie hem, but rapere wypholden pore men here hire, for whiche þei han spendid here fleisch & here blood. & so in a manere þei eten & drynken pore mennus fleisch & blood & ben manquelleris, as god pleyneȝ bi his prophetis. wherefore

Isaiah i. [15. 23.] god seiȝ bi þe prophete ysaie, þat siche lordis ben felawis of þeuys & here hondis ben ful of blood, & þerfore whanne þei preien many preieris bi mouȝ & holden vp \*here hondis, god wole not here hem ne rescue here offryngis þat ben wrongfully geten of pore mennus goodis bi extorcions & raueyne & robberie. & if men of lawe, þat schulden distroie siche

Wrongs done by lawyers.

falsnesse bi here offices & don eche man riȝt & reson,<sup>2</sup> meyn-tenen wrong for money & fees & robis, & forbaren pore men fro<sup>3</sup> here riȝt, þat it is betre to hem to pursue not for here riȝt, be it neuere so opyn, þan to pursue & lese more catel for disceitis of delaies and cauellacions & euele wilis<sup>4</sup> þat þei vsen; & þus wrong is meyntened & trewȝe & riȝt outlawid in many statis.

Serfdom.

¶ Also stryues, contekis & debatis ben vsed in oure lond, for lordis stryuen wip here tenauntis to brynge<sup>5</sup> hem in þraldom more þan þei schulden bi reson & charite; & þei grucchen aȝen, & cursen & warien nyȝt & day, & grete men of þis world<sup>6</sup> debaten, & meynthenen debatis at louedaies; & who so may be strengere wil haue his wille don, be it wrong be it riȝt, & ellis make debate among many hundrid & þousand men & sumtyme many countres, & by<sup>7</sup> sich debatynge many men holden grete houses & grete araies &

Wrongs done at love-days.

<sup>1</sup> as X.

<sup>2</sup> X inserts &.

<sup>3</sup> for X.

<sup>4</sup> willes X.

<sup>5</sup> brynke X.

<sup>6</sup> worldly AA.

<sup>7</sup> omitted X.

grete costis. & summe lordis, seme þei neuere so holy & deuout in here preieres, wolen to meyntene name of here lordischipe beten men of contre, & meyntenen oþere mysdoeris þer-to, þou; men pursuen riȝt & reson in good manere, & þis is for falsnesse of a liere & coueitise & worldly pride. & clerkis striven for holy writt & seyn þat it is most trewe & best to reule cristene mennus soulis bi, but ypocritis seyn þat holy writt is fals, & newe lawis maad of worldly clerkis ben betre for cristene men þan holy writt, & þerfore þei studien mannus lawis & techen hem to coloure bi here pride & coueitise; & leuen þe gospel & goddis lawe, for it dampneþ pride & coueitise of clerkis, & techiþ mekenesse & wilful pouerte & bisynesse in preiere & gostly ocupacion. trewe clerkis seyn þat þat religion & ordre þat crist, god & man, maade is most perfit, most liȝt & most siker for myȝt, wisdom & charite of þe lord; but ypocritis seyn þat newe religion, founden of synful men & gadrid of many erreuris, of foolis & worldly, proude & coueitise wrecchis, is best; & þerfore þei leuen cristis religion in his owene fredom, & bynden<sup>1</sup> hem bi singuler profession to synful foolis. & ȝit crist & his apostlis tauten neuere ne vseden siche profession. & herfore many children ben brouȝt to siche newe religion for loue of worldly pride & welfare of body more þan for holy lif to serue god in penaunce & clenness of soule, & sum ben stolen þefly fro here frendis, & summe bi false lesyngis & false bihestis brouȝt þer-to, & for-þinke it after, & be not suffred to turne to cristis clene religion, þou; þei ben vnable to þis newe religions maade of synful mennus \*ordynauce; & so in summe manere þei ben nedid to be dampnyd for ypoorisie & grucchyng of conscience, & leuyng of betre þing & holdyng forþ of þe worse wyttyngly. ¶ Trewe clerkis seyn also þat cristis lyuyng & his apostlis in wilful pouert, wiþ-outen fals & nedeles beggyng & whiþ-outen worldly lordischipis, is most perfit in itself & best for alle clerkis, siȝ crist god & man chees þis<sup>2</sup> lif for þe beste; & he myȝtte not erre neiþer in

Some lords maintain wrong by force.

True clerks strive for Holy Writ.

Hypocrites study man's law.

True clerks maintain Christ's order.

Hypocrites say new religion is better.

\*[p. 197 MS.]

True clerks set Christ's living as a pattern for priests.

<sup>1</sup> byndem X.

<sup>2</sup> omitted X.

þouȝt ne in word ne dede, but summe ypocritis seyn aȝenst þis in worde or dede or boȝe, þat it his best to feyne holy pouert aftir crist & his apostlis, & þer-wiþ lyuen in lustis of worldly gaynesse, of costly<sup>1</sup> housynge & grete more þan lordis don, & in costly cloþing for ony lord, & in cost of mete or drynke & makynge of grete festis of riche men. & þis lif þei holden vp bi fals beggyng of pore men, þat may not wel paie here rentis to lordis & here dymes & offryngis to curatis & meyntene here wif & children & leue out of dette, *traueile* þei neuere so besily nyȝt & day. & be þei neuere so pore & in grete dette þes ypocritis ceessen not to robbe hem bi fals beggyng, dampned of goddis lawe. oþere ypocritis seyn in dede þat it is betre for clerkis to haue worldly rentis & lordischipis dowed to hem & parische churcheis appropried to hem<sup>2</sup> bi symonye & lesyngis þan to lyue in wilful & honest pouert as crist & his apostlis diden. & ȝit þei reulen not wele þe peple, as lordis schulden, but seyn þat þei ben dede to þe world; &<sup>3</sup> techen not þe peple goddis lawe in word & ensauple as prestis schulden, but seyn it falleþ not to hem to preche; & þei *traueile* not for here lifode, as god enyoyned adam for his penaunce, & poul *traueiled* wiþ his hondis in nede for his sustenance, but þei lyuen comynly in ydelnesse & glotonye & enuye & many oþer synnys, & feynen holynesse in syngynge, in preynge of mouþ & customes maad of mannis errour, more þan in lyuynge after cristis gospel. & whanne trewe clerkis meyntenen here trewe part bi holy writt & reson & ensauple of cristis lif & his apostlis, & newe ypocritis meyntenen here fals part bi ground of synful men & bi ypocrisie & worldly power & ȝiftis of money & censures, as suspendynge, cursynge & prisonynge, & þanne is debat & strif reised at þe fulle. for many lordis & grete men ben disceyued bi þe multitude of ypocritis, & many blente bi ȝiftis of money & worldly profitis þat þei geten of þes ypocritis, & summe bi fleschly loue & worldly frendschipe, & for þat fewe stonden wiþ þe trewþe & but fewe

Possessioners  
have lands,

but do not rule  
as lords,

or teach as  
priests.

Lords misled by  
these hypocrites.

<sup>1</sup> gostly X.

<sup>2</sup> omitted X.

<sup>3</sup> omitted X.

lordis or riche cristene men stonden bi goddis lawe & profit  
 of cristene mennus soulis for to wynne þe blisse of heuene;  
 & þerfore pore clerkis ben selaundrid for heretikis, for þei Poor priests are persecuted.  
 seyn þe treuþe of holy writt, & hurlid & cursid & prisonyd  
 & lettid to preche þe gospel, for drede laste þei warne þe  
 peple after oristis techynge of þe \* false disceitis of anticrist & \*[p. 198 MS.]  
 his worldly & proude & coueitouse clerkis. & þus str[i]ues  
 & debatis ben reised & meyntened in oure lond.

¶ Also diuerse gilis or disceitis & falsenesses rengnen moche  
 in oure lond; for prelatiſ hiden þe gile of here symonye & Simony in prelates.  
 ypocrisie, þat vnneþis comeþ ony to ony grete benefice  
 wiþouten symonye, priuy or apert; & þus alle prestis &  
 lordis & comyns also ben enuynmed wiþ heresie of cursid  
 symonye, & prelatiſ þat schulden distroie synne & chase it<sup>1</sup>  
 out of londe wolen meyntene men in synne of lecherie &  
 oþere fro þeer to þeer for a pencion bi þere, & clepen þis holy Sin-rents.  
 correction; & þei ben wode if ony lord or oþere myȝtly man  
 lette hem of þis correction, þe whiche is roberie & extor-  
 sion. In confessouris regneþ moche gile for þei conforten &  
 norischen grete men of þis world in here synnys for to gete  
 a benefice, worldly wynnyng or frendschipe or lustis of<sup>2</sup>  
 here stynkyng bely, & vnder colour of holynesse leden men  
 to þe þatis of helle & sellen soulis to sathanas for drit of  
 worldly goodis & wombe ioie for a while; for þei doren not  
 telle hem þe soþe & gretnesse of here foule synnys & horiblite  
 of peynes of helle, & forsake here companye whanne þei  
 wolen dwelle stille in here synne, leste þei leese worldly<sup>3</sup>  
 worschipe & lustis þat þei seken more þan to saue cristene  
 soulis. In men of lawe regneþ moche gile, for þei meyntenen Deceitfulness of lawyers.  
 'falsnes for wynnyng & maken lordis to ' meyntene wrongis  
 & don wrongis whanne lordis hopen to do riȝt & plesse god, &  
 bi here coueitise & falsenesse þei purchasen londis & rentis  
 ynowe and don many extorsions & beren don þe riȝt boþe of  
 pore & riche, & ȝit þei maken it so<sup>4</sup> holy in signes outward,

<sup>1</sup> omitted X.<sup>2</sup> omitted X.<sup>3</sup> omitted X.<sup>4</sup> omitted X.<sup>5</sup> omitted X

as þif þei weren angelis of heuene, to colour here falsenesse  
 Merchants cheat, & blynde þe peple þerby. ¶ In marchauntis regneþ gile in ful  
 grete plente, for þei sweren falaly be alle grete membris of  
 crist & bi alle myȝtty god in trinyte þat here chaffere cost so  
 moche & is so trewe & profitable, to bigile þe peple & to  
 teche þonge prentis þis cursed craft, & preisen hym most þat  
 most bigileþ þe peple, & hidden here vsure & colouren it bi  
 sotil cautelis of þe fend þat fewe men may proue þis vsure &  
 so do servants; amende hem þer-of bi-fore þe day of dom. ¶ In seruauntis  
 regneþ gile, for þei traueilen faste awhile in presence of here  
 maister, & in absence ben ydel & iapen & don litel good, &  
 sweren faste þat þei may not labore troweliere & bisiliere þan  
 but most of all þei don. & ȝit generally in clerkis regneþ most gile, for þei  
 the clergy, who sell vain  
 prayers and  
 pardons, disceyuen men bi here weyn preieris & pardons & indulgencis,  
 for þei knowen not þe goodnesse of here preieris ne abilnesse  
 of men þat þei preien fore, but þei owen to drede sore þat þei  
 stiren god to vengeance for here owene wickid lif; & þer  
 comeþ no pardon but of god for good lyuynge & endynge in  
 \*[p. 199 MS.] charite, & þis schal not be bouȝt \*ne solde as prelatis chafferen  
 þes dayes; for who is in most charite is beste herde of god,  
 be he schepeherde or lewid man, or in þe chirche or in þe  
 feld; & who kepiþ wel þe hestis of god schal haue pardon  
 & þe blisse of heuene, & noon oþere for creature vnder god.  
 & þus gile regneþ in many statis & personys þat oure lond  
 may drede sore a conquest, But ȝif synne & gile be chasid out  
 & treuþe & charite meyntened soone.

Duties of lords. but nowe be lordis wel war þat þei don mercy & charite  
 & good conscience to her seruauntis, for ellis þei schulle gete  
 no mercy ne loue of god, for wrong oppressynge of pore  
 men axiþ vengeance of god, as doþ wrong mansleynges; & loke  
 lordis þat þei reule wel seruauntis & tenauntis, þat þei drede  
 They should set  
 good example. god & his wraþþe þe more, & flee synnys & lyue vertuously &  
 in treuþe anemtis god & man; for lordis owen to ȝeue holy  
 ensaumple of lif to seruauntis & sugetis, & ponysche hem for  
 here wickid lif anemtis god more þan for falsnesse of dispit



don aȝenst here owene persone or worldly profit; & to preise, cherische<sup>1</sup> & loue & rewarde hem for here holy lif & treuþe more þan for pleisyng of here owene persone or for doyng of here worldly anauntage or profit. & þus schullen lordis þat ben vertuous in hem self norische vertuous seruauntis & trewe to god & man, & reproue & ponysche wickid trecchouris<sup>2</sup> & cursed of lif; & þus schulde synne among hem & oþere be hurlid out & trouþe & vertuous lif meyntened & cherischid.

¶ Also lordis schullen don non extorsions to here pore seruauntis bi ne worldly lawe ne customes, for alle þes lawes & customes ben noþing worþ but ȝif þei ben reulid bi charite & good conscience; & lordis owen to procure good & reste & pees to here seruauntis as goode fadris & helperis, & suffre not here stiwardis or ony officeris to don hem wrong. for siþ þei may distroie þis wrong<sup>3</sup> & don not, þei ben fautoris & meyntenors of þis wrong, & schulle be ponyschid as þe doeris, as seynt poul seiþ, & in many cas more scharply, for here meyntenyng doþ more harm & wrong þan þe wickid stiwardis bi hem-self; for seynt poul seiþ pleynly þat he þat haþ not cure or kepyng of his owene, & most of his owene homly meyne,<sup>4</sup> haþ forsaken þe feiþ & is worse þan an heþene man. of þis it semeþ opynly þat þat lord þat chargiþ<sup>5</sup> not what wrong or extorsions his officeris don vnder hym forsakiþ þe riȝte feiþ & is worse þan an heþene man; for he doþ more harm to a cristene man, & distroieþ more cristene religion, & makith hate & grucchyng & discencion bitwixe pore & riche, & anemtis god; for þei myȝten soone enquere of trewe men of þe contre þe falsnesse of here officeris & amende hem, ȝif þei loueden treuþe of god \* & riȝtful helpe of pore men as moche as þei louen helpe of here body & holsumnesse of here bodily mete; & but ȝif þei don þus þei fallen out of charite as it semeþ, for þei louen more ellis here bely & hem self þan þe honour of crist & riȝtful gouernaile of goddis peple. & lordis schulden warne here officeris þat ȝif þei don wrong to here pore

Not to use bad laws for the oppression of their servants,

or let their officers do wrong.

Rom. i. [32.]

1 Timothy v. [8.]

[p. 200 MS.]

<sup>1</sup> church X.

<sup>2</sup> treccherous X.

<sup>3</sup> omitted X.

<sup>4</sup> omitted AA.

<sup>5</sup> chargid X.

Lords are deceived who go to matins and do not look after their officers.

Prov. xxi. 3.

No use writing letters to evil officers, who know they may safely disregard them.

Lords ought to keep the clergy in order.

tenauntis þei schulden be put out of here offices & lese here frendschipe & lordschipe, & þanne wolden officeris of lordis ben war of extorsions & wrong meyntenaunce. & lordis ben foule disceyued to dwelle att home in lustis of glotonye & lecherie & ydelnesse, & to seie here matynes & opere deuociõs in mouþ & not in herte ne dede, & to suffre pore men distroied bi euyl officeris; for god seiþ bi salamon it is betre to do mercy & riȝtful dom þan to offre sacrifices. for þe presence of þe riȝtful lord schulde more distroie wrongis & euyl meyntenaunce þan many letteris sent to euyl officeris, for þei charge not to do riȝt after þe letteris, for þer is no more pursuet don after þe deed lettre. ¶ What is it worþ a lord to crie bi word to god, whanne many pore men axen riȝtfully vengauce aȝenst him for extorsions & wrongis þat he & his officeris don or suffren<sup>1</sup> to be don in his name, whanne he may letten hem; for þan he is consentour or autor of siche wrongis. for god wole sonere here many pore riȝtfully crynge vengauce þan a lord & many ypocritis axynge vnriȝtfully helpe & wynnynge of worldly goodis; for god seiþ þat he wole not here synful men crynge to him in tyme of here nede whanne þei wolen not here pore men & helpe hem in here wrongis & myscheues þat þei ben inne. ¶ Also a grete vnriȝtwisnesse regneþ among lordis whanne þei wolen not distroie pride, coueitise & worldly lif of clerkis þat harmen so moche cristene peple. for ȝif lordis wolden dispise þe pride of coueitouse clerkis & not conferme hem ne<sup>2</sup> meyntene here worldly lordschipe & symonye, þat is opynly dampnyd bi holy writt & cristis lyuynge, þes proude worldly clerkis ful of coueitise & lecherie & opere synnes schulden sone ben abatid, & holy lif & trewe techynge schulde be brouȝt aȝen. but here renneþ moche gile & ypocrisie of anticrist & his clerkis, for þei seyn þat seculer lordis han no power vpon clerkis, but ȝif prelatiſ clepen hem to chastise clerkis whanne þei ben rebel & wolen not ben amendid bi here prelatiſ. for

<sup>1</sup> suffreþ X.

<sup>2</sup> no X.

salamon putte adoun on hei; prestis & ordeyned anoþer in his place, & owtlawid þe firste wiþ-uten axynge helpe of clerkis for traiterie don to salamon & his peple; & treson aȝenst crist & his lawe & his peple is more þan treson aȝenst an erþely kyng & more schulde be ponyschid. & as petir & poul techen, lordis ben ordeyned of god to venge mysdedis and mysdoeris & to preise goode dedis & goode doeris; þanne þe more þat \*a \*a [p. 201 MS.] synne is, þe more howen lordis to ponysche it; but þe synne of clerkis is more þan þe synne of oþere lewid men, þanne lordis owen more to ponysche synne of clerkis þanne þe synne of oþer men. & it is more synne & perilous to goddis peple whanne lowere clerkis meyntenen here synne & grete prelatis suffren hem þer-inne, & consenten þer-to for negligence or coueitise, þan whanne prelatis don here bisynesse to distroie synne & pursue wickid clerkis. þerfore lordis owen to ponysche more wickid clerkis whanne prelatis slepen & faouren hem in synne for moneye,<sup>1</sup> for ellis myȝtten kyngdomes ben conquerid for<sup>2</sup> negligence of coueitouse prelatis, as it was in þe lond of israel. & herefore whanne crist was preised of þe peple, he wente in-to þe temple & wiþ his hondis droof out symonyentis, to ȝeue ensaumple to lordis to do þe same; & þerfore petir & poul outaken not clerkis fro ponyschyng of lordis. þanne siþ goddis lawe ȝeueþ general power to seculer lordis for to ponysche mysdoeris, whi schulden þei not ponysche euyl clerkis, þat most drawn oþere men to synne & so to disturblyng of rewmes? siþ crist suffred paciently wrongful deþ of pilat, þat was a seculer iustise, moche more schulden clerkis suffren riȝtful ponyschyng of here synnys bi seculer lordis; for poul forsok not to take deþ of seculer domes men ȝif he hadde deserued it, & also appellid to þe heþene emperour of rome; & þus it semeþ þat þo clerkis þat wolen not be amended bi seculer lordis dom ben out of mekenesse & pacience & charite, & hiȝen hemself aboue crist & his apostlis aȝenst goddis ordynance bi luciferis pride, & ben cursed anticristia. & ȝit

1 Kings ii. [27.]  
Example of  
Solomon.

Sin of the clergy  
is worse than sin  
of laymen.

Clergy ought not  
to be exempt  
from law.

Acts xxv. 11.

<sup>1</sup> money X.

<sup>2</sup> to X.

lordis don gret wrong & gile, for þei auaunsen lewid men of  
Lords give pre-  
ferment to bad  
priests, kunnyng & lyuyng to benefices wip care of many<sup>1</sup> soulis,  
 & taken to hem self þe profit of þe grete benefices for many  
 ȝeris, & holden many benefy[c]ed men in here chapelis for  
 nouelrie of newe song, & maken summe preestis stiwardis of  
 here housholde, & summe preestis clerkis of here kechene,<sup>2</sup> &  
and employ  
priests in all sorts  
of secular work. summe preestis here auditours, & summe preestis tresoreris,  
 & summe aumeneris, & summe stiwardis of here courtis, &  
 summe conseileris & reuleris of here worldly plees, arraies &  
 worldly dedes, as þou; no man coude worldly office but þei;  
 & wolen not suffre hem goo teche þe soulis for whiche þe  
 schullen answere at domes day, & for whiche crist schedde  
 his precious herte blood, but suffren & meynntenen þe wolues  
 of helle to alee cristene mennus soulis bi<sup>3</sup> synne, & letten  
 almes dede boþe gostly & bodily, & so þei ben cursed traitours  
 to god & to his preestis & his pore peple. & more traitorie of  
 god & his peple is in þes preestis þat \*wilfully & costly procure  
 to haue þis worldly offices & dwellen þer-inne & leuen here  
 gostly office vndon.<sup>4</sup> but most traiterie of god & his peple is  
\*[p. 202 MS.]  
Still worse are  
the priests who  
take such office. in fals confessouris þat schulden telle lordis þe grete peril of  
Worst of all are  
false confessors. þis synne & oþere, & wolden not for drede of loos of worldly  
 frendschipe & lordischipe & worldly worschipe & wynnynge;  
 for þei sette more<sup>5</sup> bi a litel stynkyng dritt of þis world þan  
 bi helpe of cristene soulis & frendschipe of god & þe blisse  
 of heuene. Also many ietteris of contre þat wolen make  
 hem self gentel men & han litel or nouȝt to lyue onne, &  
 oþere lordis also wolen preise a worldly prelat or curat & bere  
Gentlemen stand  
by a curate that  
seates them, what-  
ever his character. him vp, þou; he be neuere so vicious in lecherie, pride &  
 coueitise & oþere synnes, so þat þis worldly curat makij hem  
 grete festis & wastij pore mennus almes in giftis of wyn &  
 vanytes; ȝe, þou; he be a market betere, a marchaunt, a  
 meyntenour of wrongis at louedaies, a fals suerere, a man-  
 quellere & irreguler. but ȝif þer be a gostly curat or preest  
 þat lyueþ a good lif in mekenesse & doynge almes to pore

<sup>1</sup> mennys AA. <sup>2</sup> lecherie X. <sup>3</sup> omitted X. <sup>4</sup> undir AA. <sup>5</sup> omitted X.

men, & not wastynge pore mennus almes in veyn feste or suche getteris, but holde hym in his preieris deuoutly & in techynge of goddis lawe trewely & in his trewe stondynge of holy writt, he schal be holde a nyggard, an hound, or an hoog, an ypocrite & an heretik; namely þif he reprove hem of here wickid lif & teche hem þe beste weie to heuene hope in word & dede, & so be hurlid & pursued priuely or apertly, & so hatid amonge hem þat he schal be fayn to sette his chirche to ferme to suche a gettere nerehonde for nouȝt, or ellis for fals sclaudre putt on him lese his chirche, or for schame or any flece þe contre, & bi þis wrong ben many men lettid fro goddis seruyce & trewe techynge. And þit lordis don many wrongis & giles in here offices, for þei wasten here tyme in slouþe & ydelnesse, & wasten here goodis in bost & pride & glotonye; & he þat best can do þis is holden of worldly men best lord & most worschipful, principaly þif he meyntene his men to bete pore men & do wrongis bi loue daies, holdynge & meyntenynge of causes þat riȝt & lawe may not haue his cours., & þus whanne þei schulden haue houshold of riȝtwise men & vertuous of lif, þei meyntenen proude luciferis children, extorsioneris, robberies, & reuers, to distroie here pore neiȝbores & maken here hous a den of þeues, & ben procuratours of þe fend to holde vp falsnesse & opere synnes, & to putte doun goddis lawe<sup>1</sup> & his seruauantis. for lordis schulden traueile als faste to kunne holy writt, & do trenþe & equityte, & meyntene riȝt of pore men \* & reste & pees<sup>2</sup> [p. 203 MS.] vp here kunnyng & power, as pore men ben bisi to labore for here owene liflode & to paye here rentis to lordis; for god seiþ bi danyd: " & now, ȝe kyngis, vnderstonde; be ȝe lerid þat demen þe erþe; serue ȝe to þe lord wiþ drede of herte, & enyoie ȝe to hym wiþ quakyng."\* & þe wise man seiþ þat þe most hard dom schal ben to hem þat ben aboute opere, & ihū seiþ þat to whom is moche bitokene, of hym schal moche ben axid. god stireþ<sup>3</sup> lordis to distroie synne & norische vertues & holy lif of clerkis & alle opere<sup>3</sup> sugetis. Amen.

but a priest who  
lives poorly, and  
does his duty,  
is insulted and  
annoyed.

Lords keep up  
trains of ill-con-  
ducted ruffians.

Psalmes ii. 10.

Wisdom vi. 6.

Luke xii. 48.

<sup>1</sup> omitted X.

<sup>2</sup> stire AA.

<sup>3</sup> pere AA.

## XVI.

## WHY POOR PRIESTS HAVE NO BENEFICE.

THIS tract, whoever may be its author, is vigorously written. It has a special interest as a full statement and defence of the motives which led Wyclif to institute his order or company of poor priests.

As evidence in favour of Wyclif's authorship, we may notice the phrase "moo sacraments than Christ used and his apostles." In the *Dialogus* we find complaints that sacraments are multiplied so as to be a burden to the Church, and Confirmation and Extreme Unction are said not to have enough ground in Scripture to be necessary to salvation (*Trial*, book iv. chapters xi., xiv., xxv.). His doctrine of dominion is brought in on p. 247. Perhaps we may see a touch of personal feeling in the statement that a curate cannot get leave of absence to study God's law without payment. Had Wyclif found it necessary to buy leave to absent himself from Fillingham in 1368?

On the other hand, the tone of several passages would lead us to attribute them to one of the poor priests rather than to Wyclif. It seems unlikely that the rector of Lutterworth would speak of a man who accepted a cure as binding himself "to o synguler place as a tey dogge," p. 252.

Copied from the Corpus MS. X. and collated with the Dublin MS. AA.

## SUMMARY.

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Whi pore prestis han none benefice.

Capitulum primum.

Summe causes meuen summe pore prestis to resceyue not benefices; þe friste for drede of symonye, þe secunde for drede of myspendynge pore mennus goodis, þe þridde for drede of lettyng of bettre occupacion þat is more liȝt or eisy, more certeyn, & more profitable on euere side. for ȝif men schulde come to benefices be ȝift of prelatis þer is drede of symonye; for comynly þei taken the friste fruytis or oþere pensions, or holden curatis in office in here courtis or chapelis or oþere veyn offices, fer fro prestis lif tauȝt & ensaumplid of crist & his apostlis; so þat comunly siche benefices comen not frely, as crist comaundiȝ, but rapere for worldly wynnynge or flaterynge or preisyng & þank of myȝtty men & lordis, & not for abilnesse of kunnyng of goddis lawe<sup>1</sup> & trewe techynge of þe gospel & ensaumple of holy lif. & here-fore comynly þes prelatis & resceyueris ben foulid wiȝ symonye, þat is cursed heresie as goddis lawe & mannus lawe techen opynly & many seyntis. & grete merueille it is now þat, siȝ seynt gregory seyȝ in pleyn lawe of þe chirche & oþere bokis þat siche men as desiren benefices schulden not haue hem, but men þat fleen hem for drede of vnabilnesse of himself & grete charge, as dide moyses, ieromye, austyn, gregory & holy seyntis; & now who can faste renne to rome & bere gold out of þe lond & paie it for deed leed & a litil writynge, & stryue & plede & curse for tipes & oþere temporal profitis, þat ben clepid wiȝ anticristis clerkis riȝttis of holy chirche, schal haue grete benefices of cure of many þousand soulis; þouȝ<sup>2</sup> he be vnable of kunnyng of holy writt, not in wille to teche & preche his sugetis, but of cursed lif & wickid ensaumple of pride, of coueitise, glotonye, lecherie & oþere grete synnis. but þere be ony symple man þat desireȝ to lyue wel & teche

Causes why poor priests do not take benefices.

Prevalence of simony.

Gregory.

Benefices bought at Rome.

<sup>1</sup> omitted X.

<sup>2</sup> þei X.

True priests  
persecuted.  
\*[p. 204 MS.]

Lords keep  
curates in their  
own service.

Indirect bribery.

Bad influence of  
some ladies.

treuely goddis lawe & dispise pride & opere synnys, bope of prelatys & opere men, he<sup>1</sup> schal ben holden an ypocrite, a newe techere, an heretik, & not suffred to come \*to any benefice. but if<sup>2</sup> he have<sup>3</sup> any lital pore place to lyuen a pore lif onne, he schal be so pursued & sclaunderid þat he schal be putt oute bi wiles, cautelis, fraudis & worldly violence, & enprisoned, disgratid or brent, if anticristis clerkis may for any gold & cursed lesyngis. ¶ And if lordis schullen presente clerkis to benefices þei wolen haue comynly gold in grett quantite, & holden þes curatis in here worldly office, & suffren þe wolues of helle to stranglen mennus soulis, so þat þei haue moche gold & here office don for nouȝt, & here chapelis holden vp for veyn glorie or ypocrisie; & if þei wolen not presente a clerk able of kunnyng & of<sup>4</sup> good lif & holy ensauple to þe peple, but a kechen clerk or a penne clerk or wis of<sup>5</sup> bilydunge of castelis or worldly doyng, þou; he kunne not rede wel his sauter & knoweþ not þe comaundementis of god ne sacramentis of holy chirche. & if summe lordis to colouren here symonye wole not take for hem self, but keuerchiefs for þe lady, or a palfrey, or a tonne of wyn; & whanne summe lordis wolden presente a goode man & able for loue of god & cristene soulis, þan summe ladies ben menys to haue a daunsere, a trippere on tapitis, or hunters or haukere, or a wilde pleiere of someres gamenes for flatteryng & iftis goyng bitwixe, & if it be for daunsyng in bedde so moche þe worse. & þus it semeþ þat bope prelatys & lordis comynly maken a cursed anticrist & a quyke fend to be maister of cristis peple, for to leden hem<sup>6</sup> to helle, to sathanas here maistir, & suffre not cristis disciplis to teche cristis gospel to his children for to saue here soulis; & so þei traueilen to exile crist & his lawe out of his heritage, þat is cristene soulis, þat he bouȝte not wiþ roten gold ne siluer but wiþ his precious herte blood þat he schedde on þe crois bi most brennyng charite. but in þis presentyng of euyl curatis and holdyng

<sup>1</sup> omitted AA.

<sup>4</sup> omitted X.

<sup>2-3</sup> omitted X.

<sup>5</sup> omitted X.

<sup>3</sup> omitted AA.



of curatis in worldly office, lettynge hem fro here gostly cure, ben þre degrees of *traiterie* aȝenst god & his peple. ¶ Þe friste is in *prælatis* & lordis þat þus holden curatis in here worldly office; for þei han here heiȝe statis in þe chirche & lordischipis for to pursue treue curatis to þe peple, & to meyntene hem in goddis lawe & ponyschen hem if þei failen in here gostly cure, & bi þis þei holden here lordischipis of god. þan if þei maken euyl curatis & holden hem in here worldly office, & letten hem to lede goddis peple þe riȝtful weie to heuene, but helpen hem & constreynen hem to lede þe peple to helle ward bi wiȝdrawynge of goddis word & bi euyl ensauple ȝeuynge, þei ben weiward *traitours* to god & his peple, & vikeris & *procuratours* of sathanas. ȝit more *traiterie* is in false curatis þat ȝeuen mede \*or hire to comen in-to sicke worldly offices, for to spare here muk & leie it in tresor, & to gete lordischepe & mauntenaunce aȝenst ordynaries, þat þei doren not elepen hem to residence & saue here soulis, but couchen in lordis courtis, in<sup>1</sup> lustis & aise of here flech for to gete moo fatte benefices, & purposen not spedly to do here gostly office. woo is to þo lordis þat ben leed wiȝ suche cursed heretikis & <sup>2</sup> *anticristis*, *traitours* of god & his peple, & namely *traitours* to lordis hem self. where lordis myȝten not fynde in alle here lordischepe trewe worldly men to reule here houshold & worldly offices, but if þei taken þer-to curatis þat ben opynly false *traitours* to god & his peple? where lordis ben so blyndid<sup>3</sup> þat þei perceyuen not þat sicke *traitours*, þat opynly ben false to god, þat þei wolen moche more ben false to hem? but þe most *traiterie* is in fals confessouris, þat schulden bi here office warne *prælatis* & lordis of þis grete peril, & clerkis also, þat þei holden none sicke curatis in here worldly offices; for þei don not þis last þei losen lordischepe & frendischepe & ȝiftis & welfare of here stynkyng bely; & so þei sillen cristene soulis to sathanas for to haue lykyngis of here stynkyng bely, & maken *prælatis* &

Three degrees of treachery.

1. Lords who keep the clergy in secular office.

Lordships held of God.

\*[p. 205 MS.]

2. Curates who buy office,

to gain exemption from the ordinary.

Lords might find secular men to look after their household.

3. False confessors

<sup>1</sup> & X.

<sup>2</sup> omitted X.

<sup>3</sup> byndid AA.

lordis & curatis to lyue in synne & traiterie aȝenst god & his peple. & so aȝenst þe hire þat lordis ȝeuen here confessouris þei disceyuen hem in here soulis helþe, & meynntenen hem in cursed traiterie of god & his peple, & þus almost al þe world goþ<sup>1</sup> to helle for þis cursed symonye & false confessours. for comynly *prælatis*, lordis & curatis ben enuenymed wiþ þis heresie of symonye, & neuere don verey repentaunce & satisfaccion þerfore; for whanne þei han a fat benefice geten by symonye þei forsaken it not, as þei ben bounden bi here owene lawe, but wittingly vsen forþ þat symonye, & lyuen in riot, coueitise, pride, & don not here office neiþer in good ensaumple ne trewe techynge. & þus *anticristis* clerkis, enemyes of crist & his peple, bi money & flatteryng & fleschly loue gedrynge to hem ledynge of þe peple, & forbarre trewe prestis to teche hem goddis lawe; & þerfore þe blynde lediþ þe blynde & boþe partis rennen in-to synne, & ful many to helle. & it is huge wonder þat god of his riȝtwisnesse distroieþ not þe housis of *prælatis* & lordis & curatis, as sodom & gomor, for þis heresie, extorsions & oþere cursednesses þat þei haunten, & for drede of þis synne & many moo summe pore wrecchis resceyue no benefices in þis world.

### Capitulum 2<sup>m</sup>.

Poor priests fear to take benefices lest they should waste the goods of the poor.      ȝit þou; pore prestis myȝten frely geten presentacion of lordis to haue benefices wiþ cure of soulis, þei dreden for<sup>2</sup> myspendynge of poore mennus goodis; & þis is more drede þan \*þe first as<sup>3</sup> anemtis here owene personys. for prestis owen to holde hem paid wiþ fode & hilynge, as seynt poul techiþ; & ȝif þei han more it is pore mennus goode, as here owene lawe & ierom & goddis lawe seyn, & þei ben keepers þer-of & procuratours of pore men. But for institucion & induccion he schal ȝeue moche of þis god þat is pore mennus to bischopis officers, archdekenes & officialis þat ben to riche,

\*[p. 206 MS.]

1 Tim. vi. [8].

Jerome.

Induction fees.

<sup>1</sup> aboute has been inserted in X. but crossed out.

<sup>2</sup> of X.

<sup>3</sup> omitted X.

& not frely comen *þer-to*.<sup>1</sup> And whanne bischopis & here officeris comen & feynen to visite, þouȝ þei norischen men in open synne for annuel rente, & don not here office but sillen souldis to sathanas for money, wrecchid curatis ben nedid to festen hem richely & ȝeue procuracie & synage; ȝe, aȝenst goddis lawe & mannus & reson & aȝenst here conscience. & also þei schullen not be suffrid to teche treuly goddis lawe to here owene sugetis & warne hem of false prophetis, & disceyuen<sup>2</sup> hem boȝe in bileue & techynge & good lif & erþely goodis, as crist doȝe in þe gospel, & comaundiȝ curatis to do þe same vp peyne of here dampnacion; for þanne þei mosten crie to þe peple þe grete synmys of prelatiſ & oþere newe feyned religious, as god biddiȝ; but þei demen þat siche sadde reprovyngis of synne is enuye, sclaudrynge of prelatiſ, & distroiyng of holy chirche. & þei schullen not be suffrid to do scharp execucion of goddis lawe aȝenst here sugetis, ben þei neuere so opynly cursed of god & sclaudris of cristene religion, ȝif þe heiȝe clerkis of anticrist han ȝiftis & pensions bi ȝere to sufre cursed men in opyn avoutrie & oþere synmys. for whanne þei ben falsly amendid bi officialis & denes no man be hardy to waken hem out of here lustis of synne, for þat schulde distroie iurdiecioun & wynnyng of<sup>3</sup> prelatiſ, & þis cursed extorsion is clepid bi ypocrisie þe grete almes of anticristis clerkis<sup>4</sup>; but here-by þei maken large kechenes, holden fatte hors & houndis & haukis & strompetis gaiely arraied, & suffren pore men to sterue for myschief, & ȝit suffren & constreinen hem to goo þe brode weie to helle. ¶ Also many tymes here patrons & oþere getteris of countre & ydel schaueldouris willen loke to be festid of siche curatis, & ellis maken hem lese þat litel þing þat þei & pore men schulden lyue bi; so þat þei schullen not spende þe dymes & offryngis after good conscience & goddis lawe but waste

Visitation fees.

They are not allowed to speak out.

Nor use church censures freely.

Adulterers protected by the officials and deans to whom they pay rent.

Curates have to feast their patrons and other idle vagabonds.

<sup>1</sup> of X.<sup>2</sup> disceyuen AA. Perhaps it should be disseruen. If not we must read "that" for "and" just before.<sup>3</sup> for X.<sup>4</sup> omitted X.

\*[p. 207 MS.]

Obliged to pronounce unjust curses,

or themselves are summoned and harassed.

A devout priest who does not give feasts is hated.

Not allowed leave of absence for study.

Pay for ordinations or appointments.

hem on suche myȝtty & riche men & ydel, & ellis, for *traveile*, cost & enemyte & dispisyng *þat* þei schullen suffre & on þe toþer side for drede of conscience, hem is betre to forsake al þan to holde it forþ. ¶ Also eche good day comynly þes smale curatis schullen haue letteris fro here ordynaries to summone\* & to curse pore men for nouȝt but for coueitise of *anticristis* clerkis; & but ȝif þei somonen & cursen hem, þou; þei knowe no cause whi anemtis god & his lawe, þei ben hurlid & somnyd fro day to day, fro fer place to ferþere, or cursed<sup>1</sup> or lese here benefices or profitis<sup>2</sup> *þer*-of; for elles as *prelatis* feynen þei<sup>3</sup> bi here rebelte schulden soone distroie *prelatis* iurisdiction, power & wynnyng. ¶ Also whanne pore *prestis* first holy of lif & deuout in here preieris ben benefised, but ȝif þei ben worldly & biȝy aboute þe world to make grete festis to riche *personys* & vikeris & riche men & costy & gaily arraied, as<sup>4</sup> here staat axiþ bi fals dom of þe world, þei schullen be hatid & hayned dounne as houndis, & eche man redi to peiere hem in name & worldly goodis. & so many cursed disceitis haþ *anticrist* brouȝt vp bi his worldly clerkis to make curatis to<sup>5</sup> myspende pore mennus goodis & not don<sup>6</sup> trewely here office, or ellis to forsaken al & late *anticristis* clerkis, as lordis of þis world, þe more cruely þan *opere* tirauntis, robbe þe pore peple bi feyned sensures & teche þe fendis lore boþe bi open *prechyng* & ensaumples of here cursid lif. ¶ Also ȝif sicke curatis ben stired to gone lerne goddis lawe & teche here *parischenys* þe gospel, comynly þei schullen gete no leue of *bischopis* but for gold; & whanne þei schullen most profite in here lernynge þan schulle þei be clepid hom at þe *prelatis* wille, & ȝif þei schullen haue ony heiȝe sacramentis or poyntis of þe heiȝe *prelatis*, comynly þei schulle bie hem wiþ pore mennus goodis wiþ hook or wiþ crok; & so þere is ful gret *peril* of euyl spendynge of þos goodis, boþe aȝenst heiȝe *prelatis*, anemtis riche men of contre, as *patrones*, *persones* & *opere* gettouris of contre, & here owene kyn for fame of þe

<sup>1</sup> omitted AA.<sup>4</sup> omitted X.<sup>2</sup> per AA.<sup>5</sup> omitted X.<sup>3</sup> & X.

world & for schame & euyl demynge of men. & certis it is gret wonder þat god suffriþ so longe þis synne vponyschid opynly, namely of *prelatis* courtis þat ben dennys of þeues & larderis of helle; & so of here officeris þat ben sotil in malice & coueitise; & of lordis & myȝtly men, þat schulden distroie þis wrong & opere & meyntenen trewe & goddis seruauantis, & now meyntenen anticristis falsenesse & his clerkis for part of þe wynnyng. & hou symple prestis durren take siche benefices, but ȝif þei weren myȝtly of kunnyng & goode lif & herty to aenstonde þes wrongis & moo þan<sup>1</sup> we may now touche for þe multitude of hem & sotil colouryng bi ypoocrisie. but certis god suffriþ siche ypoocritis & tirauntis to haue name of *prelatis* for grete synnys of þe peple & vnworþinesse þer-of, þat eche part lede opere<sup>2</sup> to helle bi blyndnes of þe fend; & þis is a þousand fold more vengauce þan ȝif god distroie bodely boþe partis & alle here goodis \* & erþe þer-wiþ, as he \* [P. 208 MS.] dide bi sodom & gomor; for þe lengere þat þei lyuen þus in synne, þe grettere peynes schullen þei haue in helle but ȝif þei amenden hem. & þis drede & many moo maken summe pore prestis to resceyuen non benefices.

Prelates' courts  
are larders of  
hell.

### Capitulum 3<sup>m</sup>.

But ȝit þou; pore prestis myȝtten haue frely presentacion of lordis, & ben holpen bi meyntenynge of kyngis & helpe of goode comyns fro extorsions of *prelatis* & opere myspendynge of þes goodes, þat is ful hard in þis grete regnyng of anticristis clerkis; ȝit þei dreden sore þat bi þis singuler cure ordeyned of synful men þei schulden be lettid fro betre occupacion & fro more profit of holy chirche, & þis is þe moste drede of alle as anemtis here personys. for þei han cure & charge at þe fulle of god to helpe here breþeren to heuene ward, boþe bi techynge, preiynge & ensaunple ȝeuyng; & it semeþ þat þei schullen most eaily fulfille þis bi general cure of charite, as dide crist & his apostlis, þou; þei bynden hem They can do

Poor priests fear  
that a cure would  
hinder them from  
better service.

<sup>1</sup> þat X.

<sup>2</sup> open X.

more good when  
not chained to  
one place.

Matthew x. 23.  
Can escape per-  
secution.

They live by alms,  
which is more  
Christlike than  
taking tithes.

Thus men would  
give alms more  
freely,

there would be  
fewer lawsuits.

Benefices lead  
priests into  
worldly busi-  
ness.

\*[p. 209 MS]

not to o synguler place as a tey dogge, & bi þis þei may most sikirly saue hem self & helpe here breþeren; for now þei ben free to flee fro o cite to a noþer whanne þei ben pursued of anticristis clerkis, as biddiþ crist in þe gospel. Also nowe þei may best wiþ-oute chalyngyng of men goo & dwelle among þe peple where þei schullen most profite, & in couenable tyme come & goo aftir stiryng of þe holy gost, & not be bounden bi synful mennus iurdeccion fro þe betre doyng.

¶ Also now þei suen crist & his apostlis neer, in þus takyng almes wilfully & frely of þe peple þat þei techen, þanne in takyng dymes & offryngis bi customes þat synful men ordeynen & vsen now in þe tyme of grace. ¶ Also þis is more medeful in boþe sidis as þei vnderstonden bi cristis lif & his apostlis; for þus þe peple ȝeueþ hem almes more wilfully & deuoutly, & þei taken it more mekely & ben more besy to lerne, kepe & teche goddis lawe, & so it is þe betre for boþe sidis. ¶ Also bi þis manere myȝtte & schulde þe peple ȝeue frely here almes to trewe preſtis þat trewely kepten here ordre & frely & opynly tauȝten þe gospel, & wiþ-drawn it fro wickede preſtis, & not be constreyned to paie here tiþes & offryngis to open cursed men &<sup>1</sup> meyntene hem in here opyn cursednesse; & þus schulde symonye, coueitise & ydelnesse of worldly clerkis be leid down, & holynesse & trewe techyng & knowyng of goddis lawe be brouȝt in, boþe in clerkis & lewid men. ¶ Also þus schulde stryuyng, pledyng & cursyng for dymes & offryngis & hate & discord among preſtis & lewid men be endid, & vnyte, pees & charite meyntened & kept. ¶ Also þes benefices bi þis cours þat men vsen nowe bryngiþ in worldlynesse & nedeles bisynesse aboute worldly officis, þat crist & his apostlis wolden neuere \*take vpon hem; & ȝit þei weren more myȝtty, more witti, & more brennyng in charite to god & to þe peple, boþe to lyue þe best manere in hem self &<sup>2</sup> to teche oþere men. ¶ Also coueitise & worldly bisynesse<sup>3</sup> of clerkis & occasion of coueitise & worldlynesse of þe peple

<sup>1</sup> X inserts not.

<sup>2</sup> omitted AA.

<sup>3</sup> sikirnesse X.

schulden be don away, & cristis pouert & his apostlis bi  
 ensaumple of pore lif of clerkis & triste in god & desiryng  
 of heuenely blisse schulde regne in cristene peple. ¶ Also þan  
 schulde prestis studie holy writt & be deuout in here praiseris,  
 & not be taried wiþ newe offices, as newe songis & moo  
 sacramentis þan <sup>1</sup> crist vsede & his apostlis, þat tauȝten vs New sacraments.  
 alle treuþe & spedly sauynge of cristene peple. ¶ Also mochil  
 blasphemye of prelatis & op̄re men of feyned obedience &  
 nedles sweryngis maad to worldly prelatis schulden þan Needless oaths.  
 cessen, & souereyn obedience to god & his lawe & eschewynge  
 of nedles op̄es & forswerynge schulde regne among cristene  
 men. ¶ Also þan schulde men eschewe comynly alle þe perilis Summary of the whole.  
 seid bifore in þe first chapitre & þe secunde & many þousand  
 mo, & lyue in clenness & sikernes of conscience. ¶ Also þan  
 schulde prestis be bisy to syke <sup>2</sup> goddis worschipe & sauynge  
 of mennus soulis, & not here owene worldly glorie & wynnyng  
 of worldly drit. ¶ Also þan schulden prestis lyue lich to  
 angels, <sup>3</sup> as þei ben angelis of offices, where þei lyuen now as  
 swyn in fleschly lustis, & turnen aȝen to here formere synnes  
 as houndis to here sp[e]wyng, for habundaunce of worldly  
 goodis & ydelnesse in here gostly office & ouere moche  
 bisynesse aboute þis wrecchid lif. for þes dredes & many  
 þousand mo, & for to be more lich to cristis lif & his apostlis,  
 & for to profite more to here owene soules & op̄re mennus,  
 summe pore prestis þenken wiþ goddis helpe <sup>4</sup> to traneile  
 aboute where þei schulden most profiten by euydence þat god  
 zeueþ hem, þe while þei han tyme & litel bodily strengþe &  
 jouþe. nepeles þei dampnen not curatis þat don wel here Do not condemn good curates.  
 office, so þat þei kepen liberte of þe gospel, & dwellen where  
 þei schullen most profite, & þat þei techen trewly & stabely  
 goddis lawe aȝenst false prophetis & cursed fendis lymes.  
 Crist for his endeles mercy helpe his prestis & comyn peple to  
 be war of anticristis disceitis, & goo euene þe riȝtte weie to  
 heuene. Amen, ihū for þin endeles charite.

<sup>1</sup> þat X.<sup>2</sup> seke AA.<sup>3</sup> an angel X.<sup>4</sup> omitted X.

## XVII.

HOW ANTICHRIST AND HIS CLERKS TRAVAIL TO  
DESTROY HOLY WRIT.

THIS tract should be compared with a short fly-leaf printed by Mr. Arnold, S. E. W. III. 186.

I cannot pretend to any sure judgment as to the authorship, but there is nothing in it at variance with Wyclif's teaching. It seems to have been written when the controversy with the poor priests had been carried on some time, and when they found it necessary to justify their constant appeals to God's law (*Talem enim habebant terminum in omnibus suis dictis, semper prætendendo legem Dei*; Goddis lawe, Knighton 2664.) It is possible that the need of such a justification would be soon felt even among the popular preachers, as it must certainly have been discovered very early in the schools. We need not, therefore, assign a very late date to this composition.

Copied from the Corpus MS. X. and collated with the Dublin MS. AA.

## SUMMARY.

CHAP. I.	As Christ ordained four Gospels, so Satan has four devices to set men's authority above that of the Gospel. These devices are specially used by friars for the glory of their orders	p. 255
II.	The first false pretence is that the Church is of more authority than the Gospel, since it decreed which gospels should be received	256
III.	The second, that Austin says he would not believe the Gospel, unless the Church told him	258
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	The true ground of faith is Christ himself	260
V.	The fourth, that men believe the Gospel without knowing why	260
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Hou anticrist & his clerkis traueilen to distroie holy  
writt & to make cristene men vnstable in þe feiþ  
& to sette here ground in deuelis of helle.

### Capitulum primum.

As houre lord ihū crist ordeynede to make his gospel sadly  
knownen & meyntened aȝenst heretikis & men out of bileue bi  
writtyng of his foure euāgelistis, so þe deuēl sathanas  
castiþ bi anticrist & his worldly false clerkis to distroie holy

Christ ordained  
his four evange-  
lists to teach the  
faith.  
So Satan has four  
false reasons to  
upset it.

\*writt & cristene mennus bileue bi foure cursed weies or fals \*[p. 210 MS.]

resons. ¶ Þe first, þat þe chirche is of more auctorite & more  
credence þan is ony gospel. ¶ Þe secunde, þat austyn seiþ þat  
he wolde not bileue to þe gospel but iif þe chirche tauȝte hym  
so. ¶ Þe þride, þat no man now on lyue wote whiche is þe  
gospel but iif it be bi approuyng of þe chirche. ¶ Þe fourþe,  
iif men seyn þat þei bileuen þat þis is þe gospel of matheu or  
ion, þei axen, whi bileuest þou þat þis is þe gospel; as who  
seiþ, þer is no cause but for þe chirche confermeþ it & techeþ  
so. Þes foure eydences & many moo makij þe fend to  
blynde men in bileue, þat þei schulden not knowe whiche is  
synne, which is vertu, which is treuþe, which is falsnesse,  
which is good, which is euyl, & which is goddis heste, &  
which is lesyng of þe fend for to bryng alle men blyndly to  
helle. & þes newe religious & principaly freris prechen þes  
eydences & sowen hem among lewid men 'in contres to  
stoppe pore prestis & lewid men,'<sup>1</sup> þat þei ben not hardy to  
speke of þe gospel & holy writt & goddis comaundementis &  
ioies of heuene & of synnes & peynes of purgatorie & of  
helle, lest þei stiren men to rise out of synnys for drede of  
peynes, & to lyfe in vertuous lif for to haue þe blisse of  
heuene. & þis disceit in bileue is maad & coniected of þes  
cursed pharisees for to magnyfie here newe feyned ordres,  
founđen of synful men, not only wiþ cristis clene religion but

1. The Church is  
of more authority  
than any gospel.  
2. Saying of St.  
Austin.

3. That we know  
which are the  
gospels by the  
approval of the  
Church.

4. A sceptical  
question. Why  
men should be-  
lieve any gospel  
to be such.

These reasons are  
invented by the  
devil to blind men  
as to good and  
evil.

They are  
preached by the  
religious orders,  
and mostly by  
friars,

for the glory of  
the new orders,

<sup>1</sup> omitted X.

<sup>2</sup> omitted X.

for which they  
care more than  
for saving their  
own or other  
men's souls.

more þan it or ony part of holy writt; & for<sup>1</sup> þei willen not be conuyct of here pride & ypocrisie & forsake here coueitise & lustis of here bely & here propre wille. þerfore þei wilen rapere renne to helle fullire,<sup>2</sup> & drawe alle men after hem heedly bi distroyng of cristene feiþ, þan to come to cristis clene religion wiþ fredam of þe gospel þat is ordeyned of god of endeles wisdom wiþ-uten errour of ony synful man; for þei mosten þan knoweleche here falsenesse & ypocrisie, bi þe whiche þei disceyneden cristene men fro þe bigyngne of here nouelries til þis tyme. but luciferis pride & coueitise of worldly muk & of hei; astatis and<sup>3</sup> worldly worschipe may not suffre þis mekenes, as men dreden ful sore, for old enuye of sathanas & hard rotyng in synne.

### Capitulum 2<sup>m</sup>.

First ground.

See we now hou þei bryngen in þe first cursed ground, þat þe chirche is of more autorite & credence þan is þe gospel.

They point to the  
gospels of Nico-  
demus and others  
which the Church  
set aside.

þei seyn þat nychodeme & many moo writen þe gospellis of cristis lif & his techyng, & þe chirche putte hem away & approued þes foure gospellis of mathen, mark, luk & ion.

The Church  
might have made  
another choice.

þan þe chirche myȝte as wel haue putt out þes foure & approued þe toþere gospelleris; siþ it was in free wille &

\*[p. 211 MS.]

power of þe \*chirche to reprove & dampne whiche þei wolden & approue & accepte whiche hem lykede; & þerfore men schulden bileue more to þe chirche þan to<sup>4</sup> ony<sup>5</sup> gospel.

These hereticks  
understand by  
the Church the  
Pope and his  
supporters.

¶ First þes fercastyng heretikis vnderstonden bi þe chirche þe pope of rome & his cardynalis, & þe multitude of worldly clerkis assentyng to his symonye & worldly lordischipe aboue alle kyngis & emperours of þis world; for ellis it were not to here purpos to magnyfye þe chirche as þei now don.

The Holy Ghost  
moved the holy  
clergy of the first  
times to take  
these gospels and  
not the others;

þanne trewe men seyn þat þe clergie þat first was kunnyng & holy of lif was stirid bi þe holy gost to take þes gospellis & charge not cristene peple wiþ mo; siþ þes ben ynowe &

<sup>1</sup> herfore X.

<sup>2</sup> fulbere AA.

<sup>3</sup> of X.

<sup>4</sup> omitted AA.

<sup>5</sup> our X.

profitable<sup>1</sup> at þe fulle, & ben figured in many prophecies of goddis lawe; & þes foure witnessis weren acceptid of þe holy gost to þis writynge for many skillis þat we may not telle now; but *certes* þe chirche myȝtte not haue putt away þes but the Church could not do otherwise. gospellis & acceptid þe oþere. for þan it hadde don aȝenst þe dom of god & aȝenst þe treuþe of ihū crist & aȝenst charite of þe holy gost, for to putte away þes witnesses þat knewen more of goddis prouynte & weren holiere of lif, & to take witnessis not so kunnyng of goddis dom ne so holy of lif ne so meke ne so stable in feiþ & in loue of ihū crist. but þes sotil heretikis traueilen nyȝt & day to ensauple þe multitude of worldly clerkis, þat ben ful of symonye, pride, coueitise, glotonye, lecherie & oþere synnes, aboue ihū crist & his gospel, for to haue here worldly lif, pride & lustis meyntened, þat no man schulde lette hem in here worldly glorie ne distrurble hem of here lustis, þouȝ þei neuere so foule lien of<sup>2</sup> god & sclaunderen his peple. for þei wolen make here cursed lif & heresies to be gospel & bileue of cristene men; but where ben more cursed traitouris to god & his lawe & more perilous & false prophetis to cristene peple? for god com- Rev. xxii. 18. aundiȝ vp peyne of his grete curs & deep dampnyng in helle þat no mān schal wiȝ-drawe fro his lawe ony poynt of treuþe, ne adde þer-to ony nouelrie þat is not approued of þe trinyte, & ihū crist seiȝ þat his gospel is euerlastynge testament. But þei wolen for-don it wiȝ a stynkyng blast of anticristis Christians should not maintain such heretics. cursed mouȝ. lord, hou doren cristene men meyntene sicke heretikis, aȝenst goddis techynge & pees of cristene peple? sicke weiward heretikis ben ful vnable to reule prelatiſ & lordis & comyns in schrifte, in prechyng & preynge & oþere poyntis of here soule helpe, for þei disceyuen hem in feiþ & good lif, for to haue here owene pride & coueitise & lustis born vp, & so drawen alle men to helle þat ben reulid bi suche false confessours, false prechours & false conseilours.

<sup>1</sup> perfytt AA.<sup>2</sup> on AA.

Capitulum 3<sup>m</sup>.

The second wheel  
in the devil's  
wain.  
\* [p. 212a MS.]

By the Church  
Austin means  
Christ, and the  
apostles and  
saints;

but these heretics  
understand the  
worldly clergy.

St. Austin is  
slandered.

Christians should  
uphold Christ's

See now þe secunde wheel in þis deuelis wayn; þei bere vpon austyn þat he seiþ þus, \*þat he wolde not bileue to þe gospel but ȝif þe chirche seide it. so trewe men answeren þus: suppose<sup>1</sup> þat austyn seiþ þis word, he seide to þis entente, þat but ȝif crist, heuyd of holy chirche, & seyntis in heuene & þe apostlis of crist, þat ben holy chirche, seiden & approueden þis gospel, ellis he wolde not bileue þer-to; & þis vnderstondynge is ful trewe & resonable & accordynge to þe lettere of austyn. but þei vnderstonden þus, but ȝif þe multitude of cursed worldly clerkis approue þis for þe gospel, ellis austyn wolde not bileue to þe gospel of ihū crist; & siþ austyn was & is so gret a doctour of holy chirche, no man schulde bileue to þe gospel but ȝif þe chirche of þes prelatiſ conſerment þat þis is þe gospel of crist. Panne<sup>2</sup> ȝif þe multitude of anticristis clerkis approuen not þe gospel ne treuþe of holy writt, no man schulde holde<sup>3</sup> þe gospel ne ony comaundement of god, ne meyntene ony treuþe aȝenst anticrist & his worldely prelatiſ. but what heresie myȝtte soonere distroie cristene mennus bileue? & god forbede þat austyn were in þis<sup>4</sup> perilous heresie, or ony cristene man. Þerfore it is cursed lesynge to sclaunder[re] seynt austin wiþ þis cursed errour, to<sup>5</sup> coloure here owene false vnderstondynge & heresie bi þis holy doctour. for bi þis cursed wheel, ȝif anticristis clerkis dampne cristene mennus feiþ & þe comaundementis of god & poyntis of charite, & bryngen in here owen weiward lawis to holden vp here pride & coueitise, & to curse men for þei don werkis of charite, men moten vp payne of dampnacion receyue here cursed dedis as bileue, & forsake þe gospel of ihū crist, & take fendis lesyngis in stede of goddis lore; & moo cursednesse to distroie cristene feiþ þan wole sue of þis cursed vnderstondynge may no man ne fend ymagyne til þe day of dom. Þerfore cristen men<sup>6</sup> schulden stonde to þe deþ

<sup>1</sup> suppo X.

<sup>4</sup> omitted X.

<sup>2</sup> þan X.

<sup>5</sup> omitted X.

<sup>3</sup> olde X.

<sup>6</sup> omitted X.

for meynthyng of cristis gospel, & trewe vnderstondyng <sup>gospel to the death, and not put their trust in prelates,</sup>  
*per*-of geten bi holy lif & gret studie, & not sette here feiþ  
 ne triste in synful prelatis & here cursed clerkis, ne in here  
 vnderstondyng of holy writt, for þei ben vnable wiþ þis <sup>whose spiritual eyes are blinded by luxury.</sup>  
 worldly lif ful of pride, coueitise, glotonye & ydelnesse, as<sup>1</sup>  
 haukyng & huntyng, & pleiying at þe chees & tablis, &  
 riot & daunsyng, & festis makyng, dronkenesse & lecherie,  
 to perceyue þe treuþe of holy writt & heiþe prouytees of god.  
 for crist seiþ in þe gospel þat þe fadir of heuene hidith þes <sup>Matt. xi. 25.</sup>  
 treuþes fro worldly wise men & queynte, & schewith hem to  
 meke men as weren cristis disciplis. & þe wise man seiþ þat <sup>Prov. ix. 10.</sup>  
 þe wisdom schal not entre in-to an euyl willid man, for þe  
 drede of god is bigynnyng & plente of wisdom, & þei han  
 not þis drede; þan þei han not þis wisdom. Þerfore it is  
 luciferis pride, & passeþ it, to constreyne men to take vnder-  
 stondyng of holy writt after þe witt & dom of sicke  
 worldly \*clerkis, þat ben enemys of crist & his lawe & his <sup>\*[p. 212b MS.]</sup>  
 seruauantis, for þei ben blynde in goddis lawe & good lif, &  
 leden blynde men to helle, as crist seiþ in þe gospel; for in <sup>They lead blind men to hell,</sup>  
 steed of keies of heuene, þat ben kunnyng of holy writt &  
 power to distroie synne & saue cristene soulis bi trewe  
 techyng & good ensauple, þei han ignoraunce of goddis  
 lawe, & no wil<sup>2</sup> to studie & lyue *per*-aftir, but kunnyng &  
 practisyng in here owene wickede lawis for pride & coueitise,  
 & feynen hem power of tirauntrie to stoppe treue men fro  
 prechyng of þe gospel, & ȝif þei prechen aȝenst here wille to  
 curse hem & prisone hem & brenne hem<sup>3</sup>; & certis þes ben <sup>of which they have the keys.</sup>  
 keies of helle.

### Capitulum 4<sup>m</sup>.

See now þe pridde wheel of sathanas chaar. Þes cautelous <sup>Third wheel in Satan's car.</sup>  
 clerkis & religious of lucifer seyn þat no man wot whiche is  
 the gospel but bi approuyng & confermyng of þe chirche.  
 but trewe men seyn þat to here vnderstondyng þis is ful of <sup>That men know the gospel only by the Church's approval,</sup>

<sup>1</sup> & X.<sup>2</sup> wel X.<sup>3</sup> omitted AA.

but Christians  
have this cer-  
tainty given by  
Christ,

falsed; for cristene men ben *certeyn* of bileue, bi *gracious* gifte of ihū crist, þat þis treuþe tauȝt bi crist & his apostlis is þe gospel, þou; alle *anticristis* clerkis crien *neuere* so faste þe *contrarie* vp peyne of curs & prisonynge & brennynges. & þis bileue is not groundid on þe pope & his cardinalis, for þanne it moste faile & ben vndon, as þei failen & ben sumtyme distroied, but on ihū crist, god & man, & on þe holy trinite; & so it may *neuere* faile but in defaute of him þat schulde loue god & *serue* him & faileþ in þes two poyntis, for almyȝtȝy god & his treuþes ben fundament of cristene *menus* feiþ.

1 Cor. III. 11.

And as poul seiþ, fundament may no man sette biaeide þat þat is sette, þat is ihū crist. *Perfore* þou; *anticrist* & alle þes<sup>1</sup> worldly clerkis ben biried depe in helle for here cursed

who is the only  
and unfailing  
ground of faith.

symonye, pride, & coueitise & *opere* synnys, ȝit cristene feiþ faileþ not; for þei ben not ground *per-of* but ihū crist is ground *per-of*. for he is oure god & oure beste maistre, euere redy to teche trewe men alle þinge þat is profitable & nedful to here soulis; & he may not faile in þis techynge but for vnabete of him þat schulde resceyue þis techynge.

### Capitulum 5<sup>m</sup>.

The fourth wheel  
of Bellal's cart.

þe fourþe whel of belialis carte is þis: ȝif cristene men seyn þei knowen bi bileue þat þis is cristis gospel, þes malicious heretikis axen whi þei bileuen þat þis is gospel. but trewe men axen of hem aȝenward whi þei bileuen þat god is god; & ȝif þei tellen a good sufficient cause, telle we

Christians believe  
in the gospel, as  
they do in God.

þe same cause whi we bileuen þat þis is cristis gospel. but þes heretikis wolden haue þis cause: for þes *prelatis* techen þat þis is cristis gospel; & þanne<sup>2</sup> þei wolden haue of þis cause alle here false purpos, þat what euere þes *prelatis* techen opynly & meyntenen stedfastly, were of as gret autorite or more þan is cristis gospel; \* & so þei wolden distroie holy writt & cristene feiþ, & meyntenen þat what-euere þei don were no synne. but cristene men taken here feiþ of god bi his

\*[p. 212c MS.]

<sup>1</sup> his X.

<sup>2</sup> omitted X.

gracious gifte, whanne he geueþ to hem knowynge & vnder- By the gift of God.  
 stondynge of treuþes nedful for to saue mennus soulis bi, &  
 grace to assente in here herte to suche treuþes; & þis men  
 clepen feiþ. & of þis feiþ cristene men ben more certeyn þan What faith is.  
 ony man is of ony<sup>1</sup> worldly þing bi ony bodily witt; & þer-  
 fore crist reproueþ most defaute of bilene, boþe in þe iewis &  
 in his disciplis, & þerfore cristis apostlis preieden<sup>2</sup> most to  
 haue stabilnesse in feiþ; for it is impossible þat ony man please Man's need of faith and its power.  
 god wiþ-outen feiþ, & so crist preide principaly þat þe feiþ of  
 petir & oþere disciplis schulden not faile endeles; & goddis  
 lawe telliþ hou bi feiþ seyntis wrouȝten alle here grete wondris  
 & meruailis þat þei diden. & if anticrist seiþ here þat eche  
 man may<sup>3</sup> feyne þat he haþ riȝt feiþ & goode vnderstondynge  
 of holy writt þoun of god whanne he is in errour, late a  
 man seke in alle þingis trewely þe honour of god & lyue iustly  
 to god & man, & þanne god wole not faile to him in ony þing  
 þat is nedful to hym, neiþer in feiþ ne vnderstondynge ne in  
 answeere aȝenst his enemyes. & for feiþ is scheld of cristene  
 men aȝenst alle temptacions of þe fend & ground of alle  
 vertues, þerfore sathanas ordeyned þes newe sectis to be so Satan, to weaken faith, has raised up these new sects,  
 manye & haue name of kunnyng & holynesse bifore alle  
 oþere, & groundiþ in hem pride, enuye, coueitise, glotonye,  
 lecherie & ypocrisie to walwe among þe peple & stire hem bi  
 word & ensauple to be vnstable in þe feiþ; & stireþ heiȝe  
 worldly prelatis to be fauourable to hem & meynntenen hem in  
 þis ypocrisie to coloure here owene synne þer-bi, & to lette  
 treue men to preche pleynly & frely cristis gospel & þe hestis  
 of god for sauynge of mannus soule. & here-bi & [bi] many  
 moo disceitis schulden cristene men knowe how þes newe  
 religious ben false prophetis & cursed sectis, of whiche crist of which Christ and his apostles prophesied.  
 & his apostlis prophesieden bifore, & tauȝten men to knowe  
 hem bi here werkis,<sup>4</sup> þat ben ypocrisie, coueitise & meyn-  
 tenynge of synne bi fals prechyng, flaterynge, fals conseilynge  
 & sclaunderynge of trewe men,<sup>5</sup> & makyng<sup>6</sup> men siker of

<sup>1</sup> only X.<sup>2</sup> preiseden X.<sup>3</sup> omitted X.<sup>4</sup> clerkis AA.<sup>5</sup> omitted X.<sup>6</sup> maken X.

Letters of fraterni-  
 nity.  
 2 John 10.      mostly helpe bi fals letteris of fraternyte & many opere nouel-  
                      ries brouȝt vp bi ypocrisie & conceitise. & as ion þe euangelist  
                      comaundiþ, cristene men schulden not rescueyue hem in-to here  
 2 Thess. iii. 14.      houses ne seie to hem, heil. & poul biddiþ þat men schulden  
                      not comune wiþ hem, þat þei ben confoundid & schamed of  
                      here false heresie & turne to cristis clene religion wiþ-outen  
                      errour of synful mennus tradicions. God almyȝtty strengþe  
                      his litil flok<sup>1</sup> aȝenst þes foure whelis of sathanas chaar, aȝenst  
 \* [p. 213 MS.]      \* anticristis clerkis & helperis, & make hem stronge in riȝtful  
                      feiþ, hope & charite, to seke trewely þe worschipe of ihū crist  
                      & sauynge of mennus soulis; to dispise anticristis bost &  
                      feyned power; & wilfully & ioiefully suffre payne & reproue<sup>2</sup>  
                      in þe world for þe name<sup>3</sup> of ihū & his gospel, to ȝeue sade  
                      ensaumple to opere for to folowe & conquere þe heiȝe blisse of  
                      heuene bi glorious martirdom as opere seyntis diden bifore.  
                      Ihū for þin endeles myȝt, endeles wisdom, endeles goodnesse  
                      & charite, graunte to vs synful wrecchis þis bone. Amen.

<sup>1</sup> folk X.<sup>2</sup> reprof AA.<sup>3</sup> þanne AA.



## XVIII.

## HOW SATAN AND HIS PRIESTS, ETC.

I SEE no reason to deny the authenticity of this tract. In complaining of the manner in which Scripture was wrested to all ends by setting aside its literal sense, Wyclif was insisting on a favourite topic. It is curious, however, to find him maintaining the right of preaching against wicked men by name, since, so far as I know, there is no personal attack in any of his works; the nearest approach to it being his allusions to Spencer's action in heading the Flanders Crusade. It is possible, having regard to the context, to suppose that he means only class names (such as 'prelates,' 'friars,' etc.). He may have been taxed with want of charity in attacking special classes, instead of confining himself to a general denunciation of sin. It seems that in any case his attacks were returned.

Copied from the Corpus MS. X. and collated with the Dublin MS. AA.

## SUMMARY.

CHAP. I.	Three heresies prevalent: 1. That holy writ is false. 2. That it is lawful to lie. 3. That it is uncharitable to denounce sins of great men	p. 264
	The first two are upheld in schools of divinity; the third by prelates and great men	265
II.	They say that holy writ is false, since against both testaments they maintain that the clergy may hold secular lordship	265
	They advocate a false mode of interpretation, refusing the literal sense	266
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III.	Lies are brought in, because prelates and new religious are false, having forsaken the way in which they are bound to live	268
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	Lying in act has led to lying in word	270
IV.	Prelates and false religious say that it is against charity to expose their sins	271
	It is a priest's duty to warn men of their sins	271
	Prelates and religious attack other men in their sermons	273
	But they wish to shut the mouths of reprovers, lest they should lose influence and wealth	273

Hou sathanas & his prestis & his feyned religious casten bi þre cursed heresies to distroie alle good lyuynges & mayntene<sup>1</sup> alle manere of synne.

### *Capitulum primum.*

Three ways to blisse ordained by God.

As almyȝtȝy god in trinite ordeyneþ men to come to þe blisse of heuene bi þre groundis, bi knowynge of þe trinite bi sad feiþ, bi treue kepyng of goddis hestis, & bi þerfit charite & endeles, so sathanas & his worldly clerkis & his feyned religious ful of sotil ypocrisie casten to distroie alle vertuous

Three heresies:

1. That holy writ is false.
  2. That it is lawfull to lie.
  3. That it is against charity to denounce sins of great men.
- Conclusions from these opinions.

lif & iustise, & meyntene alle manere of synne bi þes þre cursed groundes. Þe first is þat holy writt is fals; þe secunde þat it<sup>2</sup> is lefful & medful to lie; þe þridde þat it is aȝenst charite to crie opynly aȝens prelati synnes & oþer myȝtȝy mennys. for as þei seyn þis is bacbitynge or detraction & sclaudrynge, to brynge men out of deuocion to god & holy chirche, & make men of religion of euyl name where þei weren bifore holden goode & holy; & þis prechyng stireþ lordis & oþere men to wiþdrawe worldly goodis fro men of holy chirche, & so hyndriþ goddis seruyce & preieris for þe pees & maken<sup>3</sup> discencion & enuye. for ȝif holy writt be fals men may haue noon autorite þer-bi to reprove synne & praise vertues & vertuous lif. & ȝif it be leffel & meritorie to leie, þan no man haþ ground to stire men fro synne bi grete peynes bihiȝte bi cristis word, ne stire men to vertues bi grete ioies of heuene. for siþ it is medful to lie, as þei seyn, crist vsed þis medful craft at þe fulle, & no man may þanne wite in whiche autorite he seide soþ & in whiche he leiȝede. & ȝif it be aȝenst charite to preche & crie openly aȝenst synne of prelati & men of þe chirche & oþere myȝtȝy men, þan cristis lif & his techynge & his apostlis & prophetes in þe olde lawe & his comaundementis to his prophetis weren aȝenst charite,

<sup>1</sup> meyntenynge X.

<sup>2</sup> omitted X.

<sup>3</sup> sic in both MSS.

ful of detraccion & sclaudrynge. but what heresies mytte more blasphemie god, more distroie holy writt & vertuous lif, & more norische synne & cursed men in here lustis? & certis wiþ-inne þis seuene þeer worldly coueitouse clerkis & feyned religious<sup>1</sup> meyntened in scolis of dyuynite two þe firste heresies, & þit holden it a noble dede to susteyne hem; \* & þe þridde heresie regnyd<sup>2</sup> þan & þit doþ more & more among prelatiþ, feyned religious & lordis & comyns for þe more part. hou stiren suche heretikis & blasphemies god of treuþe to mercy bi here preieris, siþ god curseþ to here blyssyngis, as he seiþ bi prophete malechie, & here preiere is abhominable & cursed, for þei turnen away & heren not goddis lawe & fulfillen it in dede. hou<sup>3</sup> meyntenen lordis þe treuþe of þe gospel & holy writt, siþ þei meyntenen siche blasphemie heretikis to be dowid in seculer lordischipe aȝenst goddis comanðement & ensauple of cristis lif & his apostlis? hou doun prestis here office þat schulde witnesse þe treuþe of goddis lawe to suffre peyne & deþ þerfore? hou don comunis here trewe seruyce to god, þat meyntenen siche heretikis & worschipen hem in word & dede whanne þei owen to knowen here opyn falsnesse? it is grett meruaile þat god of his endles riȝtwisnesse<sup>4</sup> distroieþ not alle þis cursed peple to helle for þes cursed blasphemyes & erresies<sup>5</sup> & wickid meyntenynge; but certis þe lengere þat he spareþ bi mercy, þe sorere schal þe vengauce be but þif men amenden hem.

Two of these heresies openly \* [p. 214 MS.] maintained in schools of divinity. The third is prevalent with prelates.

Malachi ii. 2.

### Capitulum 2<sup>m</sup>.

See now hou þes cursed heretikis bryngen in þe firste blasphemye. first þei seyn & meyntenen þat clerkis may lefffully haue seculer lordischips & lyue in pompe & worldly welfare as lordis. & holy writt old & newe & cristis<sup>6</sup> lif & his apostlis dampnen þis pride & wrecchednesse in clerkis. & neden hem to mekenesse & wilful traueile & pouert. &

These heretics say that holy writ is false, by supporting things forbidden in Scripture.

<sup>1</sup> omitted X.

<sup>4</sup> mercy X.

<sup>2</sup> regneþ X.

<sup>5</sup> heretikis X.

<sup>3</sup> and AA.

<sup>6</sup> crist X.

many men aleggen faste holy writt aȝenst þe worldly lif of clerkis; þerfore þei seyn þat holy writt is fals, for trewe men schulden haue noon auctorite aȝenst here cursed lif. þe

They invent a logic that is contrary to holy writ. secunde tyme þei fynden vp a newe manere of speche or logik, þat is contrarie to þe speche of holy writt; & for þei wolen meynntenen here owen fyndyng as good & trewe, þerfore þei seyn þat þe speche of holy writt is fals þat reuersiþ<sup>1</sup> here owene fonnydnesse. & here þei maken god a fool & fals, in as moche as in hem is, & schewen hem self wise men & trewe; & algatis feynen hem self wisere & treuere þan god almyȝtty. ¶ þe þridde tyme þei coueten name of wisdom & worschipe of þis world & here owene excellence more þanne goddis honour, & þerfore þei disdeynen to sue mekely þe speche of goddis lawe & þe lif of crist & his apostlis, but maken newe lawis & logik þat maken holy writt derk & fals to þe comyn vnderstandyng of hem & here folweris. & ȝit þei schame sumdel to seie to cristene lordis þat holy writt is fals, but þei don worse bi sotel ypocrisie þat holy writt is fals to þe wordis but þe vnderstandyng þer-of is trewe; & þis vnderstandyng hangiþ in determinacion of worldly prelatiþ, þat kunnen not holy writt & ben not able to \*haue inspiracion of þe holy gost bi here holy lif, for þei ben comynly ful of symonye, pride, coueitise, glotonye, lecherie, manquellyng & opere synnys, & open heretikis & enemys of crist & his lawe & his trewe seruauntis. & ihū crist seiþ þat siche ben blynde & leden blynde men in-to þe lake of synne & at þe laste to helle; for ȝif þei han money & gold at here lykyng bi extorsion & robberie, þei recken not of cristene soulis hou fowl deuelis deuouren hem. & þe holy gost dwelliþ not in siche proude & coueitouse clerkis, for þei ben templis of þe fend & þei worschipe fals goddis & dwellen in<sup>2</sup> ydolatrie, hou schulde god teche hem þe precius treuþes of his lawe? but certis bi þis ypocrisie þei wolen bryng in what heresie þat hem likiþ & meyntene it for good treuþe & profitable.

They say that holy writ is not to be taken literally,

but as explained by prelates.

\*[p. 215 MS.]

Matt. xv. 14.

But these prelates have not the Holy Spirit to teach them the truth.

<sup>1</sup> resceyueth X.

<sup>2</sup> omitted X.

for þei seyn þat here sentence & dom is vnderstondynge of holy writt; & þes worldly prelatis wolen make a congregacion of hem self & clerkis assentyng to hem, summe for worldly drede & worldly fauour, summe for gold & hope of beneficis, & summe for drede of curs, priuynge of beneficis & sclaunder & prisonynge & brennyng. but se now þe wodnesse of þis blasphemye. first ȝif holy writt be fals, certis god autor<sup>1</sup> þer-of is fals, & siȝ þei graunten þe friste errour, þei moten graunte al þat sueȝ þer-of. also þei feynen þat a fool & a cursed deuyl is wisere & trewere þan ihū crist god & man, siȝ here speche is wittiere & trewere þan þe speche of god in holi writt, & þis reson is pleyn. suppose þat þis clerk writynge or techynge contrarie speche to holy writt schal be dampnyd, for þan he is a deuyl as crist seiȝ of iudas, & as þei feynen his writynge & techynge is wittiere & trewere þan techynge & writynge of god almyȝtty; þan it sueȝ opynly þat a fool & a cursed deuyl is wittiere & trewere þan ihū crist, kyng of wisdom & treuȝe. Lord, siȝ þe holy gost is autour & welle of witt & treuȝe, wheȝer he tauȝte not goddis prophetis & cristis apostlis to write & speke treuȝe; wheȝer þe fend sathanas techiȝ proude & coneitouse clerkis, ful of symonye & oȝere synnys, more witt & treuȝe þan þe holy gost techere of alle treuȝe tauȝte cristis apostlis & euangelistis, þat weren sad in bileue & charite & holy & trewe in lif & techynge. & whanne al þe ground is souȝt of þis heresie it stondiȝ in þis poynt, þat holy writt, goddis owene word, is fals for þis cursed heretik mysvnderstondiȝ it, or for it displeȝe þis heretik & reproueȝ þis synne. but certis bi þis skille heȝene men & fendis maken god most false of alle þingis, for þei vnderstonden þat god is most fals & wrongful & dampneȝ hem most for here synnys. but it fariȝ bi holy writt & cursed clerkis & foolis as it fariȝ bi drounken men & þe mone \*And candel; þei demen of o mone or candel to be two, for þei ben vndisposid to deme & knowe þe treuȝe bicause of here

How they get adherents.

If holy writ is false, God, its author, is false.

These heretics see amiss like drunken men. \* [p. 216 MS.]

<sup>1</sup> autorite AA.

dronkenesse, so þes foolis, bi here pride, coueitise & opere synnys, ben vnable to conseyue<sup>1</sup> þe heiȝe trewhis of goddis word; & þerfore þei seyn þat it is fals, for þei han not witt ne grace to traueile aboute trewe vnderstondyng þer-of for worldly occupacion & ydelnesse.

### Capitulum 3<sup>m</sup>.

Worldly priests  
maintain lying.

New religious  
brought in to  
imitate Christ,

are turned to  
hypocrisy,

and become a  
mere lie.  
Psalm v. 6.

John viii. 39.

Now see whi meyntenynge of lesyngis is brouȝt in. god seiþ þat no þing plesij to a fool but folie; so no þing plesij comynly to a false man but falsnesse; & for þes worldly prelatis & newe pharisees ben groundid in lesyngis, þerfore þei comenden lesyngis & meyntenen hem. for prelatis comen in þe staat of cristis apostlis to lyue in pouert, mekenesse & traueyle of þe gospel as þei deden, but þei ben turned to coueitise, worldly lordischipis, pride, ydelnesse & vanyte, & turnen cristis lif and<sup>2</sup> techynge vpsodom: Also newe religious ben brouȝt in-to þe chirche to reise up cristis mekenesse, pouert & penaunce, & to ben a bok of þis pouert & dispisyng of þe world to alle men to loken on, & þei ben turned to ypocrisie, pride, coueitise, glotonye & slouþe & bisynes<sup>3</sup> of þe world more þan opere worldly men, & ben fals bokis ful of synne & heresie; þat, as ierome & anseml<sup>4</sup> witnessen, here croune, here tonsure, here abitis ben ful of lesyngis & þei ben but feyned & peyntid men of religion, & not only lesyngmongeris but pure lesyngis. & siþ god seiþ in þe sauter þat alle þat speken lesyngis schullen ben lost, hou moche more schullen þei ben lost þat ben pure lesyngis. Þe secunde tyme, crist seiþ to þe iewis, ȝif ȝe weren abrahamus children ȝe schulden do werkis of abraham; & þerfore seiþ austyn wiþ opere seyntis þat þou art his soone whoos werkis þou dost. þan siþ þe fend is fadir of lesyngis, as crist seiþ, þes worldly clerkis, & namely feyned religious, comenden lesyngis, for to witnesse in word & dede þat þei ben

<sup>1</sup> conceyue AA.

<sup>2</sup> lesyngis AA.

<sup>3</sup> "in" in both MS.

<sup>4</sup> sic in both MS.

þe fendis children. for ȝif þei weren cristis children þei schulden holde treuþe in word & wille & dede & meyntenen þat, and dispisen alle manere of lesyngis & falnesse & synne vp here kunnyng & power; & as ion þe euangelist seiþ, þei schulden wilfully putte hem to deþ for to distroie lesyngis, siþ lesyngis stondiþ more in false dedis þan in wordis, as<sup>1</sup> holy writt, ambrose & oþere seyntis witnessen pleynly. ¶ Þe þridde tyme, þes newe ordris & flatteryng myȝtte not be susteyned wiþ-oute lesyngis, boþe in word & dede, in þis manere as þei now ben; & for to schewe \*þat þis weyn religious louen more here owene inuencions & here owene lustis<sup>2</sup> þan þe<sup>3</sup> clene religion of cristis ordynaunce & gret pouert & peynful lif after crist & his apostlis, þei preisen lesyngis for to beren vp þes weyn nouelries & haunte here lustis. for ȝif cristis owene ordre & ensaumple of his lif & his apostlis ben betere & profitere þan ony newe maad of synful men, it is a foul lesyng to chese wityngly & meyntene þe lesse perfit,<sup>4</sup> & forsake þe liȝttere, sikerere & perfitere. ¶ Also it is a cursed lesyng to drawe children, þat han but litil discrecion, to þes newe feyned religious bi ȝeftis & bi behestis<sup>5</sup> of worldly lordischipe, honour & sikernesse of bodily welfare, more þan to holde wilful pouert & penaunce & dispit & forsakyng of alle worldly þing, for al þis is symonye & heresie ȝif it be wel souȝt; but it is a cursedere lesyng to stele ȝonge children fro here frendis & bi false disceitis make hem to be professed, sumtyme aȝenst here wille, & suffre hem not to gon out of þis weyn ordre, þouȝ þei knowen hem self vnable þer-to. ¶ For sumtyme þes children frendis fallen in mornynge to deþ; & sumtyme bi myschef ben dede where here children þus stolen schulden ellis helpe hem; & sumtyme þes children schulden be goode techeris & reuleris of þe peple, & now ben cursed ypocritis, ful of coueitise, lecherie, enuye & grucchyng aȝenst god; & now þei ben nedid to rob þe pore peple bi fals beggyng, & sclaudren crist wiþ þis clamose beggyng

These new orders could not be sustained without lies. [p. 217 MS.]

Children inveigled into the orders,

so that their parents are left without support.

<sup>1</sup> of X.

<sup>3</sup> omitted X.

<sup>2</sup> both MSS. repeat "more" here.

<sup>4</sup> profit X.

<sup>5</sup> hestit AA.

dampned of goddis lawe, & ȝit þes open þefte is stifly meyn-  
tened aȝenst goddis lawe, reson & charite bi sotil ypocrisie, &  
no chastizynge don þer-onne. for men wenen þat þes stronge  
þeues ben vnder no kyngis lawe ne prelatis lawe in oure lond.  
for men vnderstonden þat fewe men of discrecion comen to  
þes nouelries but siche ȝonge bi stelynge or disceyunge, or  
ellis bi coueitise of worldly honour & sikernesse of wombe  
ioie. & herefore þes veyn religious preisen lesyngis, dampnyd  
bi holy writt old & newe, for cristis treuþe. & þe deucl is  
lesyngis fadir & disceyued mankynde bi lesyng & brouȝt it  
in-to sorowe & peyne, as þe gospel &<sup>1</sup> þe first part of holy  
writt schewiþ; & þerfore seiþ ambrose þat alle men þat louen  
lesynges ben þe deuclis children. ion þe euangelist seiþ þat<sup>2</sup>  
no lesyng is of god; þanne it is of þe denyl siþ he is fadir of  
lesyngis. þerfore þe wise man seiþ þat þe mouþ þat leiþ sleep  
þe soule; & a þef is more worþi to be suffrid þan þe lastyng  
of a lesyngmongere; & dauid seiþ þat god<sup>3</sup> schal dampne alle  
men þat speken lesyngis, & þe prophete zacharie seiþ þat  
goddis curs comeþ<sup>4</sup> to þe hous of lieris, & seynt austyn declareþ  
in many bokis þat of<sup>5</sup> eiȝte manere lesyngis þe leste is synne,  
& who euere techiþ þe contrarie disceyueþ þe peple. but for  
þes veyn religious forsaken<sup>6</sup> þe techynge & lif of crist, mene  
persone in trinyte, þerfore þei kunnen no mene bitwixe  
seyynge soþe in eche tyme & bitwixe lesynge. sumtyme it  
harmeþ men to seiþ þe<sup>7</sup> soþe out of couenable tyme & euere  
it harmeþ to lie, but sumtyme it profitiþ to be stille & abide  
a couenable tyme to speke, as dide crist & his apostlis, & ȝif  
þes veyn religious knowen þis þei schulde haue no colour to  
make lesyngis. but þer is o gret cause whi þei comenden so  
lesyngis. þei maken profession to lyue bi labour of here  
hondis, bi benetis reulis & fraunseis & austynes, & to be deed  
to þe world, & to be ensauple & bok of wilful pouert,  
mekenesse & grete penaunce &<sup>7</sup> abstynence; & now þei ben  
turned to alle manere of schrewdnesse, harlotrie & synne; &

Ambrose.

1 John ii. 21 (†).

Wisdom i. 11.

Eccius. xx. 27.

Zech. v. 4.

\*[p. 218 MS.]  
Austin.Lies are always  
bad, but truth  
should be spoken  
in season.<sup>1</sup> of X.      <sup>2</sup> omitted X.<sup>5</sup> forsakyng X.<sup>3</sup> omitted X.<sup>6</sup> omitted AA.<sup>4</sup> omitted X.<sup>7</sup> omitted X.



þerfore þei forsaken cristis scole of<sup>1</sup> treuþe & magnyfien þe deuelis scole of lesyngis; as þei first token lesyng of lif, so þei meyntenen now lesyng in word to colour þer-bi here olde cursed lif, þat no man may bryngen hem out þer-of.

### Capitulum 4<sup>m</sup>.

See nowe þe þridde heresie þat may hoold of olde synnys.<sup>2</sup> Þes worldly prelatiſ & peyntid religious, beried in here olde synne,<sup>3</sup> symonye, coueitise & pride & robberie, seyn þat it is aȝenst charite to crie opynly here cursed disceitis to lordis & comyn peple, & namely in here absence. but see þe waiwardnesse & cursednesse of þes deuelis ypocrisie & sheld of synne. Almytty god, ful of charite, comaundiþ to þe prophete ysaie to crie & cesse not, & to schewe to his peple here grete synnes. synne of comyns is grete, synne of lordis & mytty men & wise is more, but synne of prelatiſ is most, & most blyndeþ þe peple. þan treue men ben holden bi goddis heste to crie most aȝenst þe synne of prelatiſ, siþ it is most & harmeþ most þe peple. Also crist seiþ who<sup>4</sup> to hym þat to schlaundriþ a litel child of hem þat ben cristene. but prelatiſ of þe world & peyntid foolis of religion, bi here opyn pride, coueitise, glotonye, lecherie, extorsions & meyntenynge of synne, schlaundren most þe peple; for her-bi þei ben bolde to walwe in synne preue & apert; þanne aȝenst þis synne schulden trewe men crie most. ¶ Also god seiþ bi þe prophete ezechiel þat ȝif a synful man lie in synne & þe prophete schewe hym not þe peril of his synne ne vengauce of god, þerfore þe synful man schal die in his synne & þe prophete schal answer for hym, & so boþe schullen be dampnyd. & siþ eche preſt is an angel & prophete bi his preſthod, \*as seynt gregory seiþ, eche preſt is in dette to telle synful men here synnes þat þei may amende hem. ¶ Also god seiþ bi þe

These prelates say it is a sin against charity to denounce them.

Isaiah lviii. 1.

But the sin of prelates should be denounced more than any other.

Ezekiel iii. 18.

\*[p. 219 MS.] Gregory.

<sup>1</sup> & AA.

<sup>2</sup> AA reads þat maþ hoord of olde synnes. I suspect both readings are corrupt.

<sup>3</sup> omitted AA.

<sup>4</sup> wo AA.

- Ezekiel lli. 17. prophete ezechiel þat god haþ ȝouen a prest to be a spie to asprie þe sotil disceitis of þe fend & warne þe peple of hem; but among alle þe helpis of þe fend a wickid prelat or a fals religious is þe moste. Þanne a trewe prest owiþ most to warne þe peple of hem. & þerfore gregory seiþ<sup>1</sup> & lawe of þe chirche þat no man harmeþ more cristene peple þanne he þat haþ name of ordre or holynesse & þer-wiþ lyueþ wickidly; for his synne is taken to ensaunple of oþere. & þerfore seiþ gregory in<sup>2</sup> his pastoralis þat prelatis ben worþi to haue as many deþes as þei senden ensaunples of synne to here sugetis & to men þat comen after hem. and ysidre & þe lawe seiþ þat he þat consentiþ & fauoureþ a man in synne schal be reproued bi most greuous reprove. & austyn seiþ in þe lawe, þat a bischop þat consentiþ to oþer mennus synnes schulde rapere be clepid an vnchastised hound þan a bischop. & in token of þis crist purged þe temple & noon oþere place bi vengauce bodily take in his owene persone. & gregory & oþere seyntis seyn þat euele prestis ben cause of synne of þe peple. Þerfore men schulden most ponysche þis most synne of prelatis & religious þat is cause of oþere & of distruction of rewmes.
- Opinions of the fathers.
- Gregory.
- Isidore.
- Austin.
- Gregory.
- Matt. xxiv. 24.
- Matt. vii. 16.
- 1 John llii. 17.
- Luke xiv. 5.
- Also crist seiþ in þe gospel þat false prophetis & false cristis schullen ryse & disceyue manye, & biddiþ vs bewar of hem & flee hem & knowe hem bi here werkis, & telliþ what condicions & werkis þat þei schullen haue. Þanne ȝif prestis knowen þes false anticristis & false prophetis bi tokenes of goddis lawe & warne not þe peple of hem, þei ben giltif of loos of cristene soulis. Also ion þe euangelist seiþ: ȝif ony man see his broþer haue nede & schitte his purs & mercy fro hym, charite dwelliþ not in hym; moche more ȝif prestis knowen þat mennus soulis ben in myschief of fals bileue brouȝt in bi anticristis clerkis, þei ben out of charite but ȝif þei helpen hem out of þis myschief, siþ þis<sup>3</sup> is most myschief in þis world. & þerfore crist seiþ<sup>4</sup> in þe gospel ȝif it be mercy to helpe a beste falle in þe lake, moche more mercy is

<sup>1</sup> omitted X.<sup>2</sup> & X.<sup>3</sup> omitted X.<sup>4</sup> omitted AA.

it to drawe mennys soules out of errour & peril of soule; þat is disceit in bileue brouȝt in bi coueitouse clerkis & luciferis children. but anticristis prelati & veyn religious seyn þat it is aȝenst charite to nemne hem bi name in open sermon & in here absence. trewe men seyn here þat ihū crist reproved scribis & pharisees bi name & in here absence, as þe gospel witnessiþ in many placis, & eiȝte tymes bi name cursed hem & cleped hem ypocritis, & telde<sup>1</sup> to þe comune peple here \*false coueitise, ypocrisie & pride. & ihū clepid herode a fox in his absence & in his presence spak no word to him, as diuerse gospellis seyn. & ȝit anticristis clerkis tellen false lesyngis in open sermons vpon certeyn personys & in here absence, so þei don openly aȝenst here owene techynge; but anticrist wolde haue þis ende, þat in absence of his cursed worldly prelati & heretikis men schulden not reproue here cursed synnes for drede of lesyngis of charite & for bacbitynge. & anticrist makeþ hem so myȝtȝy þat in here presence no man dar speke aȝenst here opyn synnes but ȝif he wole be dede anon. And so anticrist wolde þat no man schulde speke aȝenst here synne in no manere, but suffre hem<sup>2</sup> to robbe þe peple & brynge in heresies & distroie cristen-dom. But o principal cause is whi þei sey þus; ȝif it be charite to crie þus aȝenst synnyngis of worldly prelati & veyn religious, siþ many of hem ben kunnyng & reulen lordis & prelati & myȝtȝy men in confession, þei mosten warne hem þat clerki schulden lyue in pouert & mekenesse, & not in worldly lordischipis ne in pompe & vanyte as þei now don; & warne lordis þat þei amende wickid clerki of here opyn symonye & robberyng of here tenauntis; & warne lordis & comyns hou god curseþ to blissyngis & preieris of men of cursed lif, & þat here preiere turne in-to synne, as god hym self & gregory & þe lawe witnessen, & hou preestis & religious þat ben out of charite & lyuen aȝenst goddis comaundementis, as in glotonye, dronkenesse & enemyte & pride, stiren god bi here veyn

Wicked prelates say it is wrong to preach against them by name. Example of Christ. Matt. xxiii. Luke xi. 44.

\*[p. 220 MS.] Luke xlii. 32. Luke xxiii. 8, 9.

Antichrist's priests slander certain persons openly in sermons.

Antichrist would fain shut his reprovers' mouths.

They fear lest men's eyes should be opened to their sins.

<sup>1</sup> telle X.

<sup>2</sup> omitted X.

Austin.

preiynge to vengauce *raþore þan mercy*. & as austyn seiþ, whateuere heryyngis of god here tounge blabere here lif blasphemeth god; & as god seiþ him self here preynge is cursed & abhomynable. & *certis þanne schulde lordis knowe ypocrisie, heresie & disceit of worldly prelatis & feyned religious; & þanne schulden cristene men wite þat who euere*

Who liveth best  
prayeth best.

*lyueth best preieth best; & a symple pater noster of a plouȝman þat his in charite is betre þan a þousand massis of coueitouse prelatis & veyn religious ful<sup>1</sup> of coueitise & pride & fals flatteryng & norischynge of synne. And for þes anticristis clerkis louen more here owene heynesse & pride & worldly ioie & welfare þan cristis honour & vertuous lif of cristene peple, þerfore þei ratellen þat it is aȝenst charite to tellen*

Antichrist's  
clerks fear to lose  
their riches.

*opynly here cursed disceitis & synnes; last lordis & comyns taken fro hem here wast worldly goodis, & constreynen hem to kepe mekenesse & pouert & pennance, as god techiþ & here owene profession. þus almyȝtty \*god in trinyte distroieþ þes þre nestis of anticrist & his clerkis, & stireþ alle manere of men to meyntene þe treuþe of holy writt & distroie lesyngis & openly preche aȝenst ypocrisie, heresie & coueitise, boþe in word & dede, of alle euyl prelatis & prestis & peyntid religious; for þan schal goode lif & treuþe & pees & charite regne among cristene men. Ihesu crist for þin endeles mercy graunte vs þis ende. Amen.*

\* [p. 221 MS.]

<sup>1</sup> omitted AA.

## XIX.

## OF POOR PREACHING PRIESTS.

I give this title for want of a better, but the tract has no heading in the MS. It is a summary of the wishes of the writer as to reform in Church and State; the first thirteen points of the poor priests relating to the clergy, and the eighteen which follow (and which might almost be taken as a separate tract), having reference to the duties of secular rulers.

I am inclined to date it 1377. The first year of a new reign would be a suitable time for the issue of a programme such as this; and there is a stronger ground for the supposition in the correspondence of several 'points' with petitions of the Commons in Richard's first Parliament. The tract certainly belongs to the fourteenth century. The desire that no priest or religious should be prisoned without open doom (p. 279) marks a time when no Act of Parliament had sanctioned the burning of heretics, but when the bishops, alarmed at the spread of heresy, were taking the law into their own hands.

I can give no decided opinion as authorship, but all the points are within the scope of Wyclif's teaching.

The tract is to be found only in the Corpus MS. X.

## Of poor preaching Priests.

\*[p. 234 MS.]  
Three general  
points of poor  
preaching  
priests.

\*þe first general poynt of pore præstis þat præchen in engelond is þis; þat þe lawe of god be wel knowen, tauȝt, meyntened, magnyfiyd. ¶ þe secunde þat þe grete opyn synne þat regneþ in diuerse statis be distroied, & also heresie & ypocrisie of anticristis & his folweris. ¶ þe þridde þat verrey pees, prosperite & brennyng charite be encreased in cristendom, & namely in þe rewme of engelond, for to brynge [men] redily

Special points.

1. That Christians and the clergy should set holy writ above all human authorities.

2. That all classes live in their own

\*[p. 235 MS.]  
state of life as  
Christ ordained.

to þe blisse of heuene. ¶ þe first special poynt is þis, þat cristene men, & namely clerkis of scole & curatis, studie, kepe, teche, & meyntene holy writt more þan newe statutis, customes & s[er]ymonyes maad of synful men. ¶ þe secunde, þat þe ordynaunce of ihū crist be stedfastly \*kept in alle degres, so þat alle clerkis lyue clenly on spirituale, as crist & his apostlis deden, & ȝeuyng ensauple of mekenesse, pacience & heuenly lif & charite; & þat alle seculer lordischipis turne clene to seculer lordis, as god biddiþ in þe olde testament & newe, & þat þei don riȝtwisnesse, mercy & pite, & riȝtly gouerne þe comouns in reste, pees & charite, iuste customes, [&] resonable rentis to here lordis & maistris; & þat þe comyns

3. That the order of priesthood be set above all new orders.

wilfully, mekely & trewely do here seruyce. ¶ þe þridde, þat þe ordre of præsthod wiþ clenest reulis of cristis gospel be holden [&] meyntened boþe persfiter & esier & sikerer þan ony newe [ordre]<sup>1</sup> or secte wiþ bilawis, customes, obseruauncis founden of synful men, þat ofte erreden in pouȝt, worde & dede. ¶ þe firþe, þat cursed heresie of symonye in þe clergie be distroied boþe in benefices, ordris, sacramentis & pardons.

5. That the extor-  
tions of prelates  
be stopped.

¶ þe fiftte, þat þe raueyne & extorcion of prelatis & here officeris, þat þei don vnder colour of iuridiccon & almes in meyntenyng of synne for annuel rente, wialy & trewely be stoppid, & þat þei be wel chastised for robberyng of þe kyngis

6. That curates  
hold no secular  
offices.

lege men. ¶ þe sixte, þat curatis ben not occupied in worldly

<sup>1</sup> Not in MS., but some such word is evidently wanted.

office in lordis courtis, leynge cristene soules vngouerned & vntauzt, for boþe þe lord & þe clerk don gret traierie to god & his peple; & þat fals confessoures þat norischen men in synne for worldly worschipe, worldly wynnyng, welfare & ese, be hurled out of office & courtis for drede of schedynge of worldly venyme. ¶ Þe seuene, þat clerkis be meke & obeschaunt to worldly lordis, as crist & his apostlis weren, & be not norischid in grete synne by anticristis exempcion, leste cristene rewmes be distroied for suffraunce & meynutenynge of cursed synnes. ¶ Þe eichte, þat cristene men drede more þe riȝtful cursynge of god for brekyng of his hestis þen wrongfult cursynge of synful men, þat cursen men for trewe prechyng of þe gospel & fulfyllinge of þe werkis of mercy; for god blisseþ where þei cursen. ¶ Þe nyne, þat pore men of þe rewme be not robbid for symonye of þe firste fruytis bi þe bischop of rome, ne bi þe bischepis at hom for halowyng of chirchis & auteris, & prouyng of testamentis & aquitauncis. ¶ Þe ten, þat cristene men ȝeue more credence to cristis gospel & his lif þan to ony bullis of synful bischopis of þis world, or ellis þei forsaken crist and taken anticrist & sathanas for here chief gouernour. ¶ Þe elleuen, þat þe sotil vsure of riche clerkis & marchaundes be hurled out of lond, & borwyng & lynyng be frely don to pore men for goddis sake. ¶ Þe twelf, þat no lege man of oure kyng \*be prisoned for wrongfult cursynge of prelat, þe while he is redy to be iustified bi holy writt & trewely don his office. ¶ Þe þritten, þat who euere doþ most symonye & meynteneþ most synne be demed, knowen & tretid most heretik, most aduersarie of ihū crist & principal anticrist. ¶ ȝif ony man kan proue bi holy writt or reson þat þes poyntis ben false, pore prestis wolen mekely ben amendid, & hertely preien alle goode men to helpe hem in here trewe cause for worschipe of god, helpe of here soulis, & saluacion of cristene rewmes.

¶ Þes ben eixtene poyntis to distroie grete wrongis & synnes & strengþe þe pees & charite in oure lond, ȝif þe kyng, lordis & comyns wolen practise hem wel.

7. That the clergy be subject to the lay rulers.

8. That men care more for God's curse than for excommunication.

9. That first fruits and wrongful fees be no more paid.

10. That Christ's gospel be held above bulls.

11. That usury be stopped.

12. That men be not imprisoned \* [p. 236 MS.] merely for being excommunicate.

13. That simony be held as heresy.

Eighteen points by which the land would be strengthened.

1. Swearing to be repressed.

þat þe grete blasphemye of goddis name in veyn & fals swerynge & vnlefully creaturis, as bi cristis woundes, nayles & oþere membris, be refreyned bi drede of peynes sett bi þe kyng, lordis & comounte of cristene peple, lest god take grete vengauce on oure peple, boþe in þis

2. False witnessess, and those who suborn them, to be punished.

wor[1]d & in þe toþer. ¶ þat falsse witnessse in assises & oþere causes, þat forsweren hem for coueitise, loue or drede or hate; & alle þat procuren hem þer-to, ben opynly ponynschid in ensauple of oþere; for ellis schal no man meyntene his heritage, goodis or lif for multitude of false questis. ¶ þat meyntenours of false causes bi strengþe or

3. Maintaining of false causes to be repressed.

lordischepe or bi sotel cauillacions feyned on þe lawe be wisly refreyned & scharply ponynschid in oure lond; for ellis no pore man schal ben hardy to chalenge his owene goodis, neiþer riche man but ȝif he wole make opyn debate or werre; or ellis treuþe, pees & charite schullen be exilid, & wrong & mansleyng, þeste & werre be hauntid, til oure lond be conquerid bi enemys or heþene men, as it haþ ofte ben bi-fore þis

4. Kidnapping of children by friars to be punished.

tyme. ¶ þat þe open þeste of mennus children þat feyned religious vsen vnder colour of holynesse be scharply ponynschid & forbeden, for bi þis many children ben deppere dampned þan þei schulden ellis; & þei may not worschipe here eldris as god biddiþ ne vsen þe fredom of cristis gospel; for whanne þei beþ stolen away fro here eldris, ȝe wiþ-inne age of discrecion, þei schul not forsake þe habit of freris for drede of prisonyng & deþ, þou; it be agens here wille & conscience; & þou; here frendis seke neuere so faste þei schullen not fynde hem, so þei schul be led fro place to place. ¶ þat pore tenauntis of oure

5. Friars not to be allowed to beg.

lond be not robbid bi þe gredy & nedles beggeris of sotel ypocritis hauynge þe name of religiouse men, & þat ihū crist be not sclaundered her by affirmynge \*þat he beggede nedely fro hous to hous, as feyned religiouse vsen now; siþ holy writt forbediþ sicke beggyng, þou; summe beggen myȝte be suffrid in tyme of grete nede. ¶ þat þe sotil amortasyng of

6. Disguised amortisement of land to be inquired into.

seculer lordischipis þat is don bi menene hondis in fraude of

\*[p. 237 MS.]



þe kyngis statute be wisely<sup>1</sup> enquiryed, & þe goodis turned in helpe of þe rewme in sparynge of þe pore comons of taxes.

¶ Þat þe almes of lordis þouen to *prelatis* & religious, vp *certeyn* condicions to fede *certeyn* pore men & *oper* hospitalite & *certeyn* noubmer of good *prestis*, be wisely amendid bi þe kyng & lordis whanne þes goodis beþ turned in-to pompe, glotonye & lecherie & meyntenynge false purchases; for þe kyng & lordis ben patrons & meyntenours of many synnes to destruction of þe lond. ¶ Þat þe pore comons be not chargid wiþ taxis, þe while clerkis, & namely religiouse, han *superfluente* of riches of gold & siluer & riche vesselis & *opere* iewelis; siþ alle þes goodis ben pore *mennus* goodis, & clerkis ben not lordis of hem but proctours, to spende hem trewely in pore *mennus* nedis, as goddis lawe & mannys witnessen. ¶ Þat þe wast tresour hanged on stockis & stones be wisely spendid in defence of þe rewme, & releuyng of þe pore comouns; þat þe peple of oure lond be not brouȝt to maumetrie, ne þefte, ne lecherie meyntened vnder sicke pilgrimage, ne almes drawn fro pore nedy men bouȝt wiþ cristis precious blood. ¶ Þat þe clergie of oure londe be refreyned fro pride, glorious array & worldly occupacion, & namely oure *prelatis* & *curatis*; arn<sup>2</sup> chargid bi þe kyng & lordis to teche wel here sugetis bi ensaunple of good lif & opyn & trewe *prechyng* of þe gospel, as bisily & redily as þei asken here tipes. ¶ Þat non of þe clergie be lettid to kepe trewely & frely þe gospel of ihū crist in good lyuyng & trewe techyng, for no feyned priuelegie or tradicions founden vp of synful wrecchis. ¶ Þat no *prest* or religious in oure lond be prisoned wiþ-oten opyn dom & trewe cause, fully knowen to oure kyng or his trewe conseil; for ellis worldly *prestis* & feyned religious may stoppe trewe men from *prechyng* of holy writt & magnyfing of þe kyngis regalie, & murþere þe kyngis lege men wiþ-uten answer. ¶ Þat þe obedience of children to fader & to modir & of *seruantis* & *tenauntis* to here lordis & maistris, þe whiche

7. Misuse of charitable foundations to be amended.

8. The superfluous wealth of the clergy should be employed in relief of taxation.

9. The treasure of shrines and images to be spent for public purposes.

10. The clergy to be kept to their work.

11. The clergy to be suffered to keep and teach the law of Christ.

12. No priest to be imprisoned without open judgment.

13. Obedience of children and servants to be preached.

<sup>1</sup> ? bisily; or, perhaps, for avisely = carefully.

<sup>2</sup> ? and

- obedience crist vsed & tauȝtte & comaundid it<sup>1</sup> be magnyfiyd & prechid more þan ony newe feyned obedience founden of synful men, þe whiche obedience neiþer crist ne his \*apostlis deden ne tauȝten ne comaunden ne conseileden opynly þer-to.
- \*[p. 238 MS.] ¶ Þat chepynge, & namely feiris, be not vsed on þe halidaies, 14. Markets and  
fairs not to be  
held on Sunday  
nor in church. & algatis on þe sunday & in holy chirche, for þat is exprealy  
aȝenst goddis comaundement & comone lawe of holy chirche.
15. Adultery not  
to be compounded  
for. ¶ Þat open lecherie & avoutrie be not suffrid in grette placis in  
oure rewme, ne meyntened for annual rente, for þat is vterly  
aȝenst goddis biddynge. ¶ Þat þeste & raueynen & mansleyng  
& robberie be not meyntened in seyntiwarre vnder colour of  
priuylegie; siþ kyng & cristene men ben sworn to meynten  
eche man in his riȝt & distroie wrong & falsenesse. ¶ Þat  
17. The clergy  
not to usurp the  
king's rights. worldly clerkis & feyned religious vsurpen not þe kyngis  
regalie, ne stalle fro hym his holy power graunted of god for  
no crynge or ypocrisie; siþ þei ben sworn to be trewe to þe  
kyng & furþere his worschipe & profit of his lond. ¶ Þat þe  
18. The king and  
his lords to follow  
God's law. kyng & lordis gouerne hem self in here astat as god ordeyned  
it, in gret wisdom, myȝt of men & sufficient riches to aȝen-  
stonde wrong & mysdoeris, & helpe pore men, fadirles &  
modirles & widewes & aliens in here lordschipe & worschipe,  
& rewarde trewe men, to reule clerkis in mekenesse, wilful  
pouert & bisynesse of gostly traueile for helpe of manys  
soule, as crist & his apostlis diden, and suffre hem not to  
haunten anticristis ypocrisie & tirauntrie of þe comones bi  
feyned censures, iurisdiction & power of prisonynge. & þat  
þei reule here seruauntis & tenauntis in riȝt mercy, pees &  
charite, & suffre no man hardy to breke goddis hestis in here<sup>2</sup>  
presence, ne ony man don wrong or dispit to oþere, but in  
alle in worschipe of eche oþere in vnyte, pees & charite.

<sup>1</sup> MS. inserts to. Perhaps the sentence should be corrected by repeating "be magnyfiyd & prechid."

<sup>2</sup> herte MS.

XX.

[This fly-sheet is merely a piece of translation, and is only printed for the sake of completeness. Copied from the Corpus MS. X.]

Augustinus. Arguam te nescis.

þe holy doctour seynt austyn spekyng in þe persone of crist vnto synful men seiþ in þis wise: I schal reprove þe, & in what manere & whanne þou wenest not I schal reprove þe. I holde me stille whanne þou dost amys; but I wole not holde me stille wiþ my iugement, I schal reprove þe. what schal I don vnto þe whanne þat I reprove þe? I schal sette þin self bifore þin owene face. ¶ Now soþly whanne þou dost amys þou wenest þat þou art good, for þou wylte not seen þi self. þou reprovest oþer folk, þou ne lookest not on þi self; þou acusest oþer folk, but þou ne þenkest not on þi self; þou puttest oþer folk biforn þin eien, þou puttest þi self bihinde þi bake. but whanne I reprove þe I do þe contrarie. I take þe fro þi bak, & putte þe bi-for þin owene eien. þou schalt loke vpon þi self & þou schalt bewayle þi self, & þan schal þere \*ben no manere-hou þou schalt amende þi self. þou [p. 239 MS.] dispisest now þe tyme of mercy, þe tyme of iugement cometh; for þou hast songen to me in holy chirche þes wordes: *Misericordiam et iudicium cantabo tibi domine etc.* ¶ Lord I schal synge to þe þi mercy, & þi iugement out of oure mouþ cometh, & cristis chirchis proclaymen euere where cristis mercy & eke his iugement &c. Now is þe tyme of mercy to amende vs. 3it is not come þe tyme of iugement. we han space, we han place, we don synne, eke amende we oure giltis.

## XXI.

## OF DOMINION.

DR. SHIRLEY retains Bale's title of this tract, "*De Dominio Divino*," while saying "it is certainly erroneous." I have preferred to keep near to the old name, which after all is not very wrong. It is true that the chief subject of the tract is the wrongfulness of Church endowments, and of the clergy's exemption from secular jurisdiction, but the ground of the argument is that dominion (whether possession or jurisdiction) is set by God in the hand of lay rulers, who may not alienate it without his leave. We see here how the doctrine of dominion bore on that of the unlawfulness of endowments.

I fancy that I see here signs of translation from the Latin. However this may be, I do not doubt that the tract is substantially Wyclif's. I can find no evidence as to date.

Copied from the Dublin MS. AA., where only it is found.

## SUMMARY.

CHAP. I.	It was ordained in the old law that priests should live of tithes and offerings. It is said that this law has passed away, and that lords would not be free if they might not give away their property in endowment .....	p. 284
	God is chief lord of all property, which therefore cannot be alienated without his leave, and he has forbidden in both testaments the endowment of the clergy .....	284
	This prohibition is moral, and has not been repealed, having as much sanction as the command to give tithes to the priesthood, which the clergy enforce .....	285
	Evils which follow the reversal of God's law. Lay lords are bound to amend these evils, and their confessors should urge them to do so .....	286
II.	The commands of Scripture clear. Examples set by Christ and his Apostles .....	286
	The advocates of endowments appeal to charters, which can have no weight against God's law .....	287
	The Pope's cursing not to be regarded. This thunder curseth the well that it comes from .....	288

	Miracles and the example of saints are insufficient sanctions. Miracles may be the devil's work, and all are not saints that are called so .....	p. 288
	God's law is the only safe guide, and this forbids possession to the clergy, who should be near to Christ in poverty .....	289
CHAP. III.	Antichrist's clerks say that the clergy should be judged only by ecclesiastical judges; but every man must judge his neighbour, and the only judgment that God forbids is foolish judgment .....	289
	Judgment may be foolish, as ignorant, hasty, or founded on wrong principles .....	290
	God has given men their senses and their conscience to judge with, and if they do not use these they are no better than beasts; but the devil would like to make them judge blindfold, as the Jews did with Christ .....	291
IV.	The devil says that God forbids men to judge their brethren .....	291
	Christ bade the Jews judge him, which he would not have done if laymen might not judge clerks .....	291
	Prelates should be thankful to those that reprove them .....	292
	Duty of bearing God's chastisements .....	293

## [Of Dominion.]

*Capitulum primum.*

\*[p. 188 MS.]

In the old law  
priests were to  
live on tithes  
and offerings.

An adversary says  
this law is done  
away.

God is chief lord  
of everything in  
the world.

Owners may not  
alienate their  
possessions with-  
out his leave,

therefore endow-  
ments made  
without his leave  
should not stand.

God in both tes-  
taments forbids  
endowment of  
the clergy.

God a courteous  
lord.

\*[p. 188b MS.]

\*Sij many falce gloseris maken goddis lawe derk & letten seculere men to susteyne it & kepen it; of siche falce gloseris schulde ech man be war. it is seid ofte tyme, in þe oolde lawe, þat prestis & clerkis schulde lyue on goddis part; þat is to seie, on dymes & offeryngis, & haue noon oþer heritage among here briþeren. but aduersarie of goddis lawe seiþ here bi his glose, þat þis schulde be kept in þe oolde testament, & is no nede to be kept in þe tyme of grace, for partys of þe oolde lawe ben now passid; & but ȝif lordis myȝte ȝeue here heritage to clerkis, as bischoppis & abbotis & oþer holy housis, þei were vnfree to helpe here soulis & here fadris, & so þei weren noȝt ful lordis of here owne goodis. But here we schal suppose as Cristen mennes bileue, þat god is cheef lord of eche þing of þis world. And so, al ȝif kyngis & oþere han free lordschipe, neþeles god is more free lord of þat same þing, ne it is nouȝt leefful to seculere lordis, to alyenen his lordschipe wiþouten leue of god; as in mannes lordschipe a litil lord haþ no leue to alienen his heritage but bi leue of þe cheif lord, & þis lawe haþ more resoun in þe lordschipe of god. Here may we se, sij lordis of þis world hadde noȝt leue of god þus to dowe his clerkis, here fool ȝifte schulde noȝt stonde bi skile; sij god may noȝt be contrarie to him silf. But god ofte tyme in his two testamentis forbediþ his clerkis to be þus dowid; & so þis gile, þat cam bi cautel of þe fend, schulde be now broken for defeaute of ground. ne grucche noȝt herfore þat god is cheif lord, for it falliþ to his godhed to be lord of eche þing, & more curteys lord may no man haue, ne more profitable lawis to lede a man by resoun. for þis lord suffriþ þee nouȝt to leese good but bi resoun, \*ne he axiþ þee no rente but for þis owne profite; & þus þe strengþe of goddis lawe axeþ aȝen þis lordschipe, & fillynge of goddis lawe þat sueþ grace

& pees. and se þis lewidnesse of þis resoun, þat þes lawis han no strengþe for þei ben of þe oolde lawe, þat myche is went away. certis so ben þe ten comaundementis of þe oolde lawe, þat ech man mote kepe ȝif he wole be saued; and so sermonyalis of þe oolde lawe & summe iudycialis bynden nouȝt now, but moralis bynden euere, siȝ þei stonden in vertues. And so forsakyng of worldly richessis scholde bi more skile be kept now þanne in þe oolde lawe. And herfore crist & his apostlis kepten þis ful streytly, & þei telden beste how þe lawe schulde be kept. more-ouer men may se þat siȝ þe same lawis ben scharply holden in þing þat touchiȝ wynnyng, as in dymes & offryngis, by þe same skile þei schulden be kept in lordschipe; or ellis we weren to myche chargid & mut leue seruise of crist, þat he haȝ ordeyned vs to do. Also crist & his apostlis techen vs to lyue beter þanne þes patrouns of þes newe ordriȝ; & þei lyueden pore liif, & fledde lordschipe as venym. lord, whi schulde not we do so aftir þese holy patrouns? and whanne þou seist þat goddis lawe makȝ þes lordis vnfree to helpe hem wiȝ here owne goodis, boȝe in body & soule, it is knowen þinge þat contrarie fallȝ, bi þat lordis reuersen þe ordeynauce of crist, & þus for lordis fooly fallen many harmes boȝe to lordis, clerkis & comunis. lordis ben maked pore & eke fewe in noumbre, & ofte tymes þei ben nedid to spoyle here tenauntis, & bi grucching aȝeyn þei disturblyn þe pees; and þis nedid noȝt to falle ȝif lordis of þis world hadden al þis lordschipe of þis world in here hond & ordeyned wel þerfore. more riche clerkis passen lordis in hous\*holde & meyne, in glorie of þis world, in power & richessis. And so it may falle þat þei taken fro lordis werriȝ & powers a-propriȝ unto lordis, for one harme in goddis lawe bryngȝ in opir. Also clerkis bi symonye envenemyn hem silf, & ȝif þei stode in pouert þei fel noȝt in þis perel. Also goodis of þis rewme ben yuel dispendid in hondis of þes clerkis & ȝeuen vnto false men, boȝe vnto alienes & men of þis lond; & so goodis of þis rewme ben yuel distried. Also þes clerkis ben herbi vnabled to praiȝ &

Falsity of the plea that these laws are no longer in force.

The moral commandments of the old law are still binding.

The laws are sharply kept as to exacting tithes, they ought equally to be kept in refusing ownership.

Christ and his apostles the best teachers, and they lived in poverty.

Lords reverse the ordinance of Christ, and harm follows.

They are impoverished, and spoil their tenants.

The clergy take upon them the work of lords.

Goods of the realm given to aliens.

The clergy hindered from God's service.

Jod ix. 9.

Disquiet is brought upon the country.

Negligence of lords in correction is a kind of consent.

Confessors and others should maintain this law of God.

to serue god as he comaundeþ hem; and þis is þe moste harme aȝens god & man, for þis nedīþ rewmes to lyuen in werres. for job seiþ in his book, & resoun approueþ, þat no man reuērsīþ god but ȝif he hane vnpees; and so þis dowyngē aȝens goddis lawe doiþ harme to lordis & clerkis & comunys, boþe bodily harme & harme to here soulis, & negligent of lordis in amendement here-of is a manere of consence & greggiþ here synne; & it harmeþ here elderis þat bigan þis errour, ne good doþ it noon; but moueþ lordis to pride þat here kyn haþ þus foundid housis of religious. and siþ god in his lawe cursiþ men þat breken it, it semeþ þat boþe ben cursid, lordis & clerkis, and herfore confessouris & alle þat ben on goddis half schulde moue & maynteyne þis lawe of oure god. & siþþe þe moste vnfredom is vnfredom of synne, for þat makiþ a man seruauant to nouȝt & seruauant to þe fend, & dampneþ him in helle, coueytise of fredom schulde moue men her-to, and so synne bi his manere bryngiþ his doers into þe same myre þat he eschewiþ.

### Capitulum 2<sup>m</sup>.

Laws of New Testament so clear that it is needless to answer false interpreters,

\*[p. 189b MS.]

who break the law,  
1 Cor. xvi. 22.

and are cursed of God.

Matthew x. 10.

The seuene lawis of þe newe testament ben so open, & þere-to confermed wiþ þe liif of crist & of his apostlis, þat it is no nede to reuerse þes gloses þat feynen to þes lawis a falce vnderstondinge, & techen clerkis to lyue on worldly manere. but þes religious \* & seculere prestis, & so many clerkis, bi brekyngē of þis lawe, ben cursid of god & venemyn cristendome. for crist him silf techēþ bi word of seynt poul þat he is cursid of god þat loueþ nouȝt crist; but siþ he onely loueþ crist þat kepiþ his wordis, who euere brekiþ cristis lawe is cursid of god, and he þat fauoriþ þis part or assentiþ here-wiþ; & his cursyngē is more þan cursyngē of þe pope, or ony oþere sensuris þat he kan feyne; & so clerkis of þis lond semen<sup>1</sup> irregulere, for þei han so longe leyen in so gret cursinge. Also in þe tyme of grace crist for-bede his apostlis þat þei

<sup>1</sup> senen MS.



schulde nouȝt bere in þe weye þat wolde lette hem to preche; myche more clerkis schulde nouȝt take on hem such lordschipe, þat wolde lette more to preche & to serue god; siȝ clerkis ben now more pore of ȝiftis of god & more bisi aboute þe world, þanne to bere staues or kotis or hoosis or gretynge of folke þat crist forbeed his apostlis. Also we schulden haue mynde on þe passioun of crist, hou dere he bouȝte his lawe whanne he was deed herfore, for al þat he suffride & kyndenesse þat he dide was to comende his lawe to men þat comen aftir him. O, how vnkynde ben þei þat dispisen þis lawe, or for to breken it or to putte oþere byfore it. certis þei ben cursid, as þe salme seiȝ, and suche ben vnable to preie or to ȝeue ony sacramentis. and ȝif þat heresie were wel knowen, þes clerkis were heretikis more þanne ony oþere; for þei defenden here part aȝenes goddis lawe bi falce lawis & cautels to here lyues ende. But ȝit antecristis clerkis prouen bi here resouns þat þe kyng & þe rewme mote nede maynteynen hem, siȝ þe ben sworn to þe grete charite.<sup>1</sup> But here we schal supposen as cristen mennes bileue, þat no mennes lawis ne chartirs maad of men han strengþe but in as myche as goddis lawe confermeȝ hem; for what is ony chartre or ony lawe worþ, But ȝif god conferme it by his \*lawe? & so þis grete chartre wolde moue bi goddis wytt, þat kyngis & here rewmes schulde maynteyne þe chirche by þe ordeynauce of god, & distroie þe contrarie. and ȝif we taken hede boȝe kyngis & rewmes bi here opyn oþis schulden take away þes rentis þat þe fend haȝ dowid wiȝ clerkis aȝens cristis ordeynauce. ffor no wise man wolde seiȝ þat lordis by here oþis schulde maynteyne lawe of þe fend aȝens ihesu crist; and so to chalenge of þe kyng to maynteyne alle here chartres & alle here newe lawis þat þei han founden were to chalenge þe kyng as þe fendis seruauȝt; and þere were ouere myche dispit to here lyge lord. and ȝif þou seiȝ þat cursyngis purchased of þe pope and oþere felle sensuris þondured ouere til englond schulde fere ouere rewme to do sicke þingis; Here we schal suppose as

Christ forbade his apostles to take anything that could hinder them from preaching.

Luke x. 4.

Psalm cxix. 21. Despisers of Christ's law accursed, and unable to give sacraments. They are the worst heretics.

Magna Carta.

Charters void if against God's law.

\*[p. 190 MS.]

Kings should maintain the Church after God's ordinance.

If England is threatened with cursing and censures,

<sup>1</sup> Sic in MS. for chartir.

oure bileue þat no mannes cursynge haþ ony strengþe but in  
as myche as god himsilf cursiþ; and so ofte tyme cursiþ þe  
fendis mynystria, & god him silf blissiþ and þe fend cursiþ;  
we answer that God blesses when  
the devil curses, & if þou seie þat moo men stonden wiþ siche cursynge þanne  
wiþ blissynge of god, & hem schulde we trowe; here oure  
and we must trust God, al-  
though a ma-  
jority be against  
us. bileue techiþ vs þat goddis lawe is trewe & mote stonde, al if  
þere be mo fendis þan trewe men, and triste to no man in þis  
mater but to goddis lawe; for þat seiþ god himsilf, þat may  
neuere be false.<sup>1</sup> O how hardy be we maad to werren on oure  
briþeren, & how foule cowardis to stonde in goddis cause, &  
certis all þis is maad bi þe fendis craft. drede we nouȝt þis  
Curses settle at  
home. þondir, for it turneþ aȝen & cursiþ þe welle þat it come fro.  
ffor men stable in bileue ben a þick walle to turnen aȝen þis  
þondir þat it<sup>2</sup> persiþ nouȝt. But if þou seist þat oure rewme  
stood in myche ioie whanne þe chirohe was putt & mayntened  
\*[p. 190b MS.] in þis staat, & so it were ful dredeful \*to distrie þis staat.  
But certis þis is a fendis skile to maken vs drede in feiþ;  
but we schal vndirstonde, as goddis lawe techiþ us, þat ofte  
Earthly prosper-  
ity not a proof of  
righteousness. tymes fendis children passen here in welþe þe children of god  
þat aftir schal haue blisse. & so it is a feble skile: if oure  
rewme hadde suche welþe whanne þei dide & maynteyned  
suche staat to þe chirche, þanne þei diden wel & plesantly to  
god. make goddis lawe þi iuge, for þat mote nedis be, & þis  
iuge may nouȝt folde ne faille in riȝtwisnesse; and as þe gospel  
seiþ þis iuge is aduersarie to ech man in erþe þat holdiþ nouȝt  
goddis lawe. But þou seist þat myraclis & lyues of holy men  
approuen þis dowyng of þe chirche, and god wiþ his seyntis;  
who schulde be so hardy to breke siche an ordeynance?  
Testimony of  
miracles and  
saints for en-  
dowment. But here schulde we wyte þat many suche sygnes comen ofte  
of þe fend for mennes firste synne; so, as seynt poul seiþ, þe  
fend haþ power for to figuren him in-til an aungel of liȝt; & so  
he is vntrewe man þat trowiþ to siche signes as myche as he  
trowiþ to þe feiþ of goddis lawe. & so it is no bileue þat alle  
þes men ben seyntis þat ben hirid of þe pope to ben holden  
siche; and fewe men woot how þes wondris comen þat we

<sup>1</sup> falle MS.<sup>2</sup> is MS.

olepyn myraclis, wheþer of good or yuel; ffor well we wyten þat þe fend doiþ ofte myche good. stonde we stable in oure bileue, for þat may neuere faile. But þe fend replyeþ aȝenst þis truþe, and seiþ, þe king's graunt bi his owne chartre & bullis of þe pope confermed þis dowyng, how schulde men denye þis or distroie it, But ȝif þei reuersen al þe ordynance of þis rewme? Here I woot þat men of lawe ben moued bi sicke resouns. But professouris of goddis lawe schulde stonde by here bileue, and putte abac mannes lawe, but ȝif goddis lawe ap<sup>\*</sup>proue it; & so ȝif chartris of men ben contrarie to goddis lawe, þes chartres schulde be wayschen and goddis lawe schulde stonde; and so ȝif þes possessioneris toke fre þis in here lond and allegede here chartris, and trewe men goddis lawe, þanne schulde men se whiche were goddis children & whiche þe fendis children by maynteyn[yn]ge of þes lawis. and so þe fend can nouȝt do but ȝif he ouere do, whanne he argueþ þus, þat ȝif a rewme were purgid of errouris in goddis lawe, þanne were þis rewme distryed. wele I woot þat goddis lawe ȝeueþ seculer lordschipis to seculer lordis & forbediþ hem to clerkis. þe laboureris of cristis chirche han leffully rentis & worldly possessionis oþere þan clerkis han, ffor þei ben hijere in degree and neer to crist in pouerte; & boþe þes þingis to-gidre may þei nouȝt haue.

God's law is the only safe guide.

The devil pleads bulls and charters, and says the laws of the realm will be overthrown.

\*[p. 191 MS.] No laws or charters should weigh against God's law.

God's law forbids possessions to clergy,

whose distinction should be that they are near Christ in poverty.

### Capitulum 3<sup>m</sup>.

But aȝens þis blaberen antecristis clerkis, and aleggen goddis lawe, but to false sentense, þat seculer men schulde nouȝt iuge of clerkis, how euere þei don; for þei han propre iuges, as popis & bishopsis & oþere iugis vndir hem; & her-to þei leggen but lewydly goddis lawe. Here schal we wite þat þere ben many iugementis, as iugement bi goddis lawe and iugement by mannes lawe, & in boþe þes lawis ben many manere iugementis; and schal we trowe þat ech man of discrecioun schal iuge of his neiȝbore, be he more or lesse, be he prest or clerk, lord or ellis pore man, and so to al þe speche þat is in goddis lawe aloonely fool iugement is þere-inne for-

Antichrist's clerks say that the clergy should be judged only by their proper judges.

Different kinds of judgment.

Foolish judgment the only one forbidden,

i.e. judging  
ignorantly,

\*[p. 191b MS.]

Rom. xiv. 4.

or hastily, on too  
little evidence,

or on too great  
reliance on au-  
thority,

(thus men are de-  
ceived by popes),

or in laying down  
false principles.

Kings should  
have the jus-  
tice of bulls  
examined.

\*[p. 192 MS.]

fendid; & man may iuge folily upon many maneris; as þif a man iuge of þing þat he knowiþ noȝt, as many men *presumen* to iuge a man to heuene, or ellis iuge him to helle bi here feyned cursyng, & so *prelatis* \*ofte tymes blasfemen in god, & taken on hem iugement & knowyng of god; and þis iugement dampned poul, for *prelatis* schulde noȝt iuge *seruauntis* of god in þat þei knowe nouȝt. þe secounde foly of iugement stondiþ in þis, þat men iugen to liȝtly & bi litil eydence to good or to yuel, þat sueþ noȝt *þer*-of; as þif a man iuge for fame of his broþer or for autorite of name, þat what euere he seye [is] soþe, and sekiþ noȝt þe resoun of þing þat he seiþ; & þus ben men disceyued in iugement of popis and of oþer *prelatis* & of oþere comyntes, & ofte tymes on þis wise ben men disceyued of iugement of myraclis, & many oþer signes, and þus *mennes* iugementis ben ofte ful of errouris whanne þei iugen by *mannes* entent bi ouere<sup>1</sup> liȝt eydence. men schal euere suppose þe good, but þif open eydence teche þe contrarie, of þingis þat men þenken on. the þridde manere of errour þat falliþ in *mannes* iugement is falcheed of here prynciple þat þei groundem hem on; as falce wytnesse þat gone on a quest gabben in here witnessis, þei maken þe-iuge erre and pupplische a sentence contrarie to trewþe. & riȝt þus multitud of antecristis disciplis may moue men to leue cristis lore; but blessed be god, þat in euery chirche haþ ordeyned masse bookis to witnesse his gospel. And þus schulde kyngis bi worschipe of here staat, constreyne here lyge freris & here oþere clerkis, vp peyne of here leggeaunce, to telle trewþe of þes bullis & of þes oþere nouelries, wheþer þei ben of bileue, & grounde hem in resoun or in goddis lawe, & examyne here proues wheþer þei ben trewe men. and þus schulde þe rewme be reuled bi riȝt, and falce men distroyed þat venemen þe rewme; & þus schulde men iuge þat ben goddis *seruauntis*, al þif þei stirte noȝt vp in pilatis chaier. and so ech iugement þat is \*noȝt groundid in god schulde be fled of men as disceyt of þe fend. ffor god him silf is treweþe, as þe

<sup>1</sup> euere MS.

gospel seiþ, and þe fend is fadir of lesyngis. and so sum good iugement is of mennes out-wittis, as þei iugen whiche mete is good & whiche mete is yuel, & sum men iugement is of mennes witt wiþinne, as men iugen how þei schal do, by lawe of consience; as cristen men schal iuge to whom þei don here almes, and þat þei feden nouȝt fendis children among here owne heed.<sup>1</sup> & it were al on to reue fro worldly men þis iugement, & to seie þat þei ben bestis dampnable for here folye. And þus þe fend may hide mennes wittis & bobbe hem in here resoun, as þe iewis diden wiþ crist, & leden hem to helle as blynd avocatis of þe fend. þis blynde boffetynge schulde worldly men eschewe, ffor it helpiþ nouȝt to þis world ne to þe toþer world. And wite wel þes lordis þat god haþ ȝeuen hem resoun for to seruen him, and loken here owne profiȝt; ffor þis lord of his curtesye axeþ no seruyse of man, but ȝif it turne to his profyt & nouȝt to þe profyte of god. and þus it were al on antecrist to teche þat men schulde nouȝt iuge of dedis of his clerkis, & to seie þat he is lorde aboue ihesu crist.

Some judgment  
is by the senses,

some by con-  
science.

Without such  
judgment men  
would be beasts.

Matt. xxvi. 68.

### Capitulum 4<sup>m</sup>.

Aȝeyns þis þe fend grucchiþ bi many blynde resouns, and seiþ þat god forbediþ his men to iuge of here briþeren. But we schulde trowe to wordis þat god puttiþ in his lawe. ffor god biddiþ þat a man schulde assaye him silf, and so ete of þe breed þat is þe sacrid oost. ffor he þat etiþ unworþily etiþ his owne iugement, ffor he iugiþ nouȝt wisely þe worþinesse of goddis body. & þe holy salme seiþ: "vnderstond, ȝe kyngis; and schaak of ȝou rudenesse, ȝe þat jugen londis." Sum tyme iugement god grauntid to kyngis, as daviþ & salamon & many opere kyngis. & ȝif þou seie þat popis lawe spekiþ oþer wise of \*jugement, haue þe popis lawe more suspette; siþ goddis lawe spekeþ þus, and þus crist biddiþ þe iewis to iuge of him riȝt iugement. Lord, wheþer þes clerkis ben more hiȝe ouere seouleris þan was our lord ihesu crist ouere þes falce iewis? ffor trewe men ben certeyn þat crist bad hem

The devil says  
God forbids men  
to judge their  
brethren.

1 Cor. xi. 28.

God's law teaches  
otherwise.

Psalm ii. 10.

The pope's law  
not to be trusted.  
\*[p. 182b MS.]  
John vii. 24.  
Christ bade the  
Jews to judge  
him.

<sup>1</sup> þ herd.

noȝt iuge of him but ȝif it were leeful to lewid men to iuge of clerkis; and so it were al on to denye siche iugement and denye regalye þat falliþ to þe kyng. Lord, wheþer þe lawe of ynglond schal be now distried bi fablis of heretikis contrarie to goddis lawe? Wel I woot þat men were wont bi iugement of ynglond to dampne prestis and clerkis for robberie & þefte, and also for trayterie and oþer smale trespas; and ȝif þei now denye þis þei denye þe regalye. And þus seie to antecrist þat crist bad men iuge of him boþe bi his godhede and eke by his manheed. Lord, wheþer antecristis clerkis ben more þanne was crist? Also seynt poul iugiþ of petris synne, and aȝen-stoode him for he was reprouable. Lord, wheþer prelatis now ben more confermed in grace þanne was seynt petir þanne aftir sonde of þe holy goost? Also ech man schulde bi þe lawe of þe gospel vndirnyme ech broþer þat synneþ aȝens him. But comunly þes prelatis synnen aȝens lewid men; þanne lewid men by here feiþ schulde vndirnyme þes prelatis. And so it is al on to oute-take þes prelatis fro suche snybbinge of þe peple & make hem more þan crist; ffor ȝif crist myȝte haue synned he wolde þus haue be blamed.

Also by þe lawe of charite ech man schulde loue ech oþere; and siþ god haþ ȝeuen men witt to se þat prelatis don yuel, bi þe lawe of charite þei schulde moue hem to good. & so it were al on to take prelatis fro þis iugement and seie þat þei ben fendis þat may nouȝt be amendid. also bi goddis lawe a man schulde for charite drawe \*his enemyes beste oute of þe lake; but god haþ more reward of men þanne of beestis, þanne myche more schulde a man helpe men oute of synne. also siþ ech of vs schuld knowe him sif synful and be glaad of seuene goostly werkis of mercy, he schulde haue ioye þat men reproued him of his synne; and certis so wele ech man but þe quyk deuyl; ffor he for his pride wele not be blamyd of god. And herfore seith þe wise man þat he þat hatip blamyng is suture of þe fend, rebelle aȝens god. And salamon seiþ: "he þat dispisiþ his blamere schal be sodenly distried & noȝt helid of his synne." And herfore techen seynt poul to

The king's rights  
attacked.

Crimes of priests  
punishable by the  
law of England.

Gal. ii. [11.]

Matt. xviii. [15.]

Reproof is a duty  
of charity.

\*[p. 193 MS.]

We should be  
glad to be re-  
proved.

Ecclus. [xxi. 7.]

Prov. xv. [10.]

Titus i. [13.]

reprove sicke ful harde. ffor þus dide crist oure alþere maystir reprounge þes pharisees, and so he dide to peple Matt. xxiii. clepyng him sathanas, and so charite chacchiþ men to þis iust jugement. ffor goddis lawe techiþ vs to don to oþere Matt. vii. [12.] men as we schulden willen þat þei diden to vs. But who led bi resoun putt in greet perel wolde noȝt be glaad to haue helpe þere of? But siþe ech man by synne is in an huge perel, he schulde be glaad of eche þing þat warneþ him of his perelle, ȝif it be neuere so lowe & werse þan man in kynde. For ellis men<sup>1</sup> in obedient as þe firste apostata. Wel I rede in goddis lawe þat god was obedient unto voys of man as to his owne Josh. x. [12.] instrument. And so siþe ech creature þat telliþ a man a treuþe is instrument of god to schewe him þis treuþe, it were oon to dispise þis instrument in þis and to dispise þe treuþe of þe lord þat he schewiþ. But he were oute of resoun þat were smyten in feueris or ellis in a frenesye or ony oþer siknesse þat wolde noȝt take his medicine or reule of anoþer man, al ȝif it were displesynge to him for a tyme. Thus meke men & trewe men blamen noȝt þe creature þat telliþ hem a treuþe in name of god, siþe þe lord moeueþ hem for profyt \*of men to \*[p. 193b MS.] tellen hem goddis wille, in him schulde þei heren. and so ȝif we can se clerkis schulde wiþ ioie suffre temporal lordshipis be taken away from hem. For wel we wyten þat þis were noȝt aȝens goddis lawe ne hyndrid hem noȝt to gete hiȝe setis in heuene; but raþere disposide hem to come to myche blisse and þus schulde ech man willen as god him silf biddiþ hem.

The clergy ought to part with their temporal lordships joyfully.

And so take heede what god biddiþ þee do & do þat and noon oþer, for al oþere is synne. & loke to alle þingis þat comen to þee to suffre and suffre it mekely, siþ god nediþ þee þerto & sendiþ it for þe beste, al ȝif þou kanst noȝt se it; as a child is ofte betyn for his owne profyte and ȝit he grucchiþ þer-aȝens, for he seeþ noȝt þe resoun. and þis moueþ many men mekely to suffre whateuere comeþ to hem, for so biddiþ charite.

Do God's will and bear his chastisement.

<sup>1</sup> weren probably omitted.

## XXII.

## TRACTATUS DE PSEUDO-FRERIS.

I REGARD this tract as almost certainly Wyclif's, and in this I am supported by Mr. Arnold's opinion, who omitted it only because he had printed so much invective against the Friars. It has an interest as showing that Wyclif felt it necessary to justify his attacks upon the Mendicants, though it must be owned that the apology takes the form of a renewal of the offence. But we must not disregard the 'pseudo' which forms part of the title, and is not forgotten in the text. What Wyclif inveighed against is the evil which followed from admitting and binding to an order men who did not live in the spirit of its founder. With a true follower of St. Francis Wyclif would have had much in common. Even as it was, he admits there were good men among them: as Paul and Nicodemus were among the Pharisees, to whom he delighted to liken them.

This higher temper may be noticed in his dealing with the practice of midnight prayers (p. 317). Such rising to pray he says may be good, or it may be a hindrance to a man whom God calls to some better occupation, and it is presumptuous to make a binding rule on the subject. So in his Latin sermons he says, "*Non observant omnia que Christiana religio precipit et observat, cum non observant mensuram*" (MS. Trin. Coll. Camb. fo. 195). Of his rougher humour there is a good specimen on p. 319, where he likens friars between whom there is ill-feeling to dogs in a sack.

Among the marks of authenticity we may note the incidental use of the doctrine of Dominion (p. 316) and of Wyclif's favourite point that it is impossible to tell of any man whether he will be saved or damned (p. 317). Another characteristic passage is that on p. 312: "*We graunten mekeliche that . . . we faylen in the heyghnesse of charite.*" Wyclif knew that his besetting fault was intemperance in attack. In a passage quoted by Dr. Shirley (F. Z. xlv. note) he tells us that he was accused of vindictiveness and spite; and in the tract *De Sex Jugis* (Lechler ii. 603) he says: "*Omnes enim cogitamus superflue, quomodo vindicta caperetur de hostibus Christi atque ecclesiæ, et potius cogitamus imprecando istam vindictam quam alia media misericordiæ, quæ sic injuriantibus cederent ad salutem.*"

I must not omit to notice that this sharp attack on the Friars contains no mention of the Eucharist, but I cannot on that account disregard the weighty reasons in favour of its genuineness.

Copied from the only MS., Dublin, C. v. 6. [CC.].



## SUMMARY.

CHAP. I.	Many people cannot bear to hear friars spoken of as false, but we must do as God's law bids. We are bid to reprove sin; and as Christ reprov'd Pharisees we must reprove these new orders, which are Pharisees from Christians	p. 296
	We must not blame untruly, hastily, or on false principles; nor from envy, but from love	297
	Wrongfulness of trying to stop such language, since it is used by Paul	298
II.	There is good and evil in the orders. Some friars leave the convent and get better employment; yet they encourage the others who remain	298
	Their observances are superfluous. Christ's rebuke to Pharisees	299
	The New Testament forbids sects, but these orders make sects	299
	Covetousness of prelates and friars, who ought to take little and return much	300
III.	A sect is a new order, with a new patron and rule	301
	Christ's sect does not insist on clothes	301
	St. Peter's prophecies of the new sects and their evils	302
	How St. Paul speaks of them	303
IV.	See whether St. James spoke of these friars. He speaks of two religions: one pure, the other vain. The pure religion is that of Christ. Not kept by friars. Their various faults	304
V.	St. Jude prophesies of apostates and his warnings in their details correspond to the ways of friars	306
VI.	St. John's warnings against the friars	309
	His writings, like all other authors of the New Testament, teach us to reprove friars. They attribute ill-will to their reprovers, but God is the judge of intent	311
VII.	The fiend's clergy say that in reprov'ing them we make ourselves equal with God, whereas we are sinful. We acknowledge our sins, but believe that we are Christ's servants, and that we speak as he bids us	312
	Christ's example. Need of reproof	313
VIII.	The fiend gives six reasons to love these orders—	
	I. Their dress. But it is wasteful	315
	II. Abstinence. Not true of all of them, and, if true, not necessarily good	316
	III. The excellence of their prayers. They do not know that they will be saved. Their selling prayers shows a bad conscience	317
	Their rules are presumptuous	318
	IV. The holiness of the society. They are not all holy, nor is their united prayer necessarily powerful	318
	Good life the best prayer, and the cloister is often not the best life	319
	V. Their special prayers. Their prayers are not so good as the Paternoster, or Christ would have taught them	320
	VI. Their handsome churches and appointments. These they ought to grieve for, since they are got by robbery, spoiling the poor, and injuring parish churches	321
	Christ warns us against these sects. We are bound to withstand them	323
	If we are shown to err, we will turn to the truth	324

## Tractatus de Pseudo-freris.

*Capitulum primum.*

\*[p. 81 MS.]  
Many people dislike to hear friars called hypocrites.

It is a duty to  
reprove sin.  
Matt. xviii. [15.]

One of Christ's  
apostles was  
Iscaariot.

Why should these  
new orders be  
above reproof?

Christ reprov'd  
Pharisees.  
Matt. xxiii. [13-  
33.]

\*For many beren heuy þat freris ben clepid pseudo or ypocritis, antecristis or fendis, or ony siche name, it were to telle what goddis lawe seyþ here, & bi lore of goddis lawe men shulden stonde stifly. ffirst men taken of bileue þat þei shulden reprove synne; siþ crist techiþ þat ȝif þyn broþer synneþ in þee, þou shalt þries reprove hym; & fro þe bigynnyng of þe world til þis tyme was it vaid þat men shulden reprove synne for loue & worship of god. for it were al oon to lette þis & to lette men to be goddis children, and to forsake crist god & take men fulliche to þe fend, & so forsake cristis maundementis, & bi-come þe fendis seruaunt. But for siche an heresye somme men shulden suffre martirdom, & somme men make resouns, & somme men vsen here worldliche strengþe; siþ crist, heued of martris, deyede to destrie þis heresye, & alle hise martris aftir deyeden in þe same cause; and hey; prestis of þe temple wiþ pharisees þat crist reproveþ weren more and betere groundid þen ben þe sectis of þise freris. Aftirwa[r]d men supposen þat þise freris may lytlyche erre; & bi dedis þat fame telliþ, þei synnen & harmen meche þe peple. Siþ crist welle of religion here chees to hym tuelue apostlis, & ȝit oon of hem was Sharioth, whom it was leueful to reprove — what vortu haue þise nēwe ordri, þat ben copen in wiþ-oute ground, þat men shal not reprove hem, harmen þey neuere so myche þe chirche? hit were al oon to graunte þis, & ȝiue it vp to þe fend, & fyȝte no more in goddis cause, but assent to þe fend what euere he do; & it is al oon to reprove synne, & to reprove persones þat synnen. lord, siþ freris synnen ofte, why shulden not men reprove hem, & ȝif al þe secte assentaþ, speke we sharpliche aȝen þe secte; þus spak crist sharpliche aȝen þe secte of pharisees, as mathew telliþ in eyhte woos þat

crist spak aȝen hem, & ȝit crist louede *persones* of hem, as  
 weren poul and nychodeme. lorde, siȝ þise newe ordris ben John iii. [1.]  
These orders are  
Pharisees from  
Christians.  
 pharisees fro cristen men, whi shulden not men by ensaumples  
 of crist speke sharpliche aȝen here synne? but in ilche werk  
 god askiȝ ordre, & so in blamyng of freris. \*Two þingis. There must be  
order in reproof.  
[p. 81b MS.]  
 ben in þis ordre þat cristen men shulden holde; first þat men  
 þat blamen hem shulden holde treuȝe & not gabbe on hem; Order requires  
that blame be  
true,  
 for al ȝif þise ordris vsen þis craft, ȝit þei don here amys, for  
 craft of lyyng is not leueful, siȝ it is openliche aȝen treuȝe,  
 & so it is aȝen crist, þe whiche is þe first treuȝe. & þus men  
 may leuefulliche, but of hard, fyȝte, plete & scorne, but þe  
 craft of lyyng is dampned generulliche, & þus cristen men for all lyyng is  
damnable.  
 shulden be war to putte falsliche blame on freris; & herfore  
 many men speken g[e]neralliche of here synne, & leuen to Some men try to  
avoid being per-  
sonal;  
 descende to *persones* lest þei medlen fals wiȝ soȝ. & þus þei  
 speken bi *condicioun*, or supposyng, or gessyng, þat ȝif freris  
 don þus cristen men schulden be war wiȝ hem. neuerþeles  
 we witen bi þe cours of goddis lawe þat þise men þat ben  
 disposid & knowen defaute in certeyn *persones* shulden but personal re-  
proof may be a  
duty.  
 reprove hem in here beerd, but euere by mekenesse & loue.  
 þus baptist reprovede heroude of his open synne. & officials John Baptist.  
 and freris hauuten ofte þis craft amys, when þei louen more  
 monee or ordris þen þei don heelp of here soulis, & ofte þei  
 punysshenn men bi peyne þat god approueȝ not. þe oȝer  
*condicioun* of blamyng þat cristen men shulden holde is þat  
 þei shulden blame no men bi enuye or coueytise, but That blame be  
not due to envy  
or covetousness.  
 algatis bi charite þat þei hauen to god & to his chirche; ȝhe,  
 to þo *persones* þat þei snybben, al ȝif þei shal be dampned  
 aftir, & þus noon man shulde curse an oȝer but for loue  
 þat he haȝ to hym, as god dampneth neuer his *servaunt* but  
 for mercy & for loue. & þus in speche aȝen freris men casten  
 to holde þise two, and ȝif þei faylen in ouȝer of hem þei cryen  
 on god *mercy* & help; for wo is vs ȝif we ben stille, & speken  
 not aȝen here synnes, wenne we witen þat þei synnen open-  
 lich aȝen bileue, & loden many soulis aftir hem by wrong  
 weye as fendis don. & þus men supposen of freris þat somme Reproof should  
spring from love.

John vi. [70.]  
Some friars will  
be damned, and  
are devils.  
\*[p. 82 MS.]

of hem shal be dampned, & þenne we witen bi þe gospel þat þei ben quike fendis. lord, who shulde lette men to speke here as crist doih? siþ bi siche comune speche \*his lawe shulde be betere knowen, but as we witen not of þis frere

but we must not  
say this of any  
one friar,  
but speak heartily  
against their  
errors.

wheþer he shal be dampned, so we kepen vs in ours speche þat we clepen not þis frere a fend. but aȝen errours þat þey sownen men shulden speke hertliche; & bi siche reproungis god may turne þise freris to goode, & kepe sugetis in goddis weye, þat ellis wolden go the weye to helle. & as anentis

[2] Cor. xi. [26.]  
Paul speaks of  
false friars.

fals freris, resoun techiþ þat þise ben fals, & poul spekiþ þat perile is in fals freris. lord, whi shulden men be lettid to speke þus, siþ goddis lawe seiþ so? dampne þou þis holi writ, & lette þou men to rede it, & releese here oblishyng bi comune vse þat god approueh, & þenne þer is som colour to blame men þat vsen þis word, but freris ben oblishid of god & bi here rewele to seye þis word, & as þei seyen freris weren þenne & longe bifore, & somme false, what shulde lette þe holi goost to speke of fals freris bi poul.

Let them blame  
Holy Writ.

### Capitulum 2<sup>m</sup>.

Some friars are  
good and some  
evil,

ȝit cristen men shulden be war in here speche aȝen freris, & for somme ben goode and somme euele, men shulden specifie þise euele, & not reproue good wiþ euele lest þei erriden in blamyng here breþeren, & herfore cristen men han declarid hou men shulden knowe a pseudo-frere & what is good

and there is good  
and evil in their  
order.

in here ordre & what in here ordre is euel, as so myche of here ordre is good as is seid in goddis lawe, & as myche of here ordre is euele as discordiþ fro goddis lawe; but many þingis may be wel don, & ȝit þei ben euele knytted to-gedre; as tyme & oþer circumstaunce þat limiten peyne for a dede ben aȝen þe fredom þat crist wole haue in hise lawe. & þus þise goode

Friars leave the  
convent,

men of freris drawn hem fro here priuat rewelis & fro here lyuyng in comune, lest it neede hem to breke goddis lawe;

and get work that  
releases them  
from the rules;

as somme freris procuren to be bisshopis, somme to be lystris and liue out of comunes, & somme to be wiþ lordis or laydis,

& somme freris to bi wiþ biſshopis; but þat þat þei ſeyn iſ beſt, aſ obedience to here ſouereyn & riſyng at myd-nyȝt whiþ kepyng of here priuat reulis & ſewyng of here chapitris, þiſe ben warliche put abao wiþ þe moost witty of freris.

But ȝit þer ben ouer-many \*cowordis & fooliſ ſtondyng in þiſ fredom, ſiþ þey dar not reprove here comunes in kepyng of here obſeruauncis, but dwellen in her naked habitis in tokene þat þei wolen turne aȝen. & certis in þiſ iſ noon wiſdom, but errour on many ſydis; for ſiche kepyng of þiſe habitis techiþ þat þei laſten in þiſ ſynne, & conſenten to þe firſt errours, aſ ypocritis aȝens god. and þerfore many men wolden conſele þat þei caſtaden a-wey þiſe habitis & ſich fool

<sup>\*(p. 82<sup>b</sup> MS.)</sup>  
yet they encourage thoſe who remain to keep the rule, and themſelves wear the habit,

oblyſſhyng, and token fredom of criſtis lawe; & þuſ techiþ ilche word of criſt, þat reproveþ þiſe newe ſectis, for here newe obſeruauncis to whiche þey obliſhen hem ſo myche ſmacchen ſom weye ypocriſie, or ellis þey ben ſuperflue, and obliſhen men wiþ-oute cheſoun aȝen þe fredom of criſtis lawe.

which they ſhould caſt away.

& herfore criſt clepiþ ſo ofte phariſees ypocritis, & ſeyþ: “fle ȝee fro ſourdou of phariſees, þat iſ ypocriſye, for þei ben blaunchid wiþ-oute aſ ſepulchris, and wiþ-inne ful of fylþe.

Their obſervances are ſuperfluous, and are againſt the freedom of Chriſt.

Wo be to ȝou, phariſees,” ſeyth criſt, “þat ben hud monu-mentis; and men wandrynge on hem knowen not þe filþe wiþinne. oon of þe wyſe men of lawe onſuerede to criſt, and ſeyde þuſ: mayſter, ſeyng þiſe þingis, þou makeſt to vs greet ſtrif. and criſt ſeyde to þiſ man: & wo to ȝou, wiſe men of lawe, þat chargen men wiþ birþins þat þei may not bere, and ȝee wiþ ȝoure oon fynger touchen not ȝoure makid birþins.”

Chriſt's rebuke to Phariſees, Luke xi. [44.]

& here men taken of criſtis wordis þat men ſhulden not lette to ſpeke for god, al ȝif þei ſuffren harm for here ſpeche; for criſt tolde more ſharpliche þiſ wo, when þiſ lawere hadde tolde þiſ perile. & men may ſee of þe ſame word þat conſenteris to ſiche ypocritis ben in þe ſame dampnacioun, ſiþ criſt ſeyþ: “and to ȝou be wo.” Also bi þe newe lawe ben ſectis ofte reprovud, & noon drede þiſe newe ordris maken diuerſe ſectis, & ſo bi oure bileue þiſe ordris ben reprovud. “I woot, ſeiþ poul, þat aftir myn diſceſſ wolues of raueyn ſhal

and to lawyers.

These orders make diuers sects. St. Paul's warning. Acts xx. [29.]

come in to þe chirche, and þei shal not spare þe floo. & of þou silf shal rise wicked men, spekyng peruerse þyngis, so þat þei leden disciplis aftir hem. & herfore wake þee, & þenke onne hou bi þre þeer nyȝt & day y ceessed not bi teris monestyng ilche of þou; & now y commende þou to god and to word of \*his grace, whiche is myȝty to edifye & ȝiue heritage in alle halewid. but siluer and gold or cloþ of non of þou coueytide I, as þee þours self witen, for to neede of þyngis þat i hauede and to hem þat weren wiþ me ministreden þise hondis, bi trauel þat i me self dide. alle þise þyngis haue i shewid to þou, for men þat trauelen þus moten take sike men & helpe hem wiþ siche goodis, & haue mynde of þe word of þe lord ihesu, for he seyde þat it is more blissid more to ȝiue þen to take." þise wordis of holi writt, siþ þei ben feyþ of cristen men, ben more to preyse þen alle propre rewel of þise newe ordris; for here autours weren lesse worþ, & hauen neede þat þe pope conferme hem. for poul was betere & myhtyere þen alle þe patrouns of þise new ordris; & non pope confermeþ holi writt, siþ it is first confermed of god. & noo drede poul telliþ here a rewele þat cristen men shulden holde, & first men may see here hou poul prophesyede soþ of comyng of þe newe sectis in-to þe chirche, boþe oon & oþer, & hou þei shal be wolues of rauelyn & not spare þe floo þat þei ben inne; for what prelat or religiose spariþ to pile þe comune peple, but coueytiþ gold & siluer & cloþ, fare þe peple neuere so euele. as freris when þei beggen of men þenken not hou þei ben rycheþen þen pore men þat þei beggen of, þat hauen greet neede for hem & heoris to þyng þat freris tillen of hem, and certis þis spoylyng is falsere þen open rauelyn of dai þeues. But poul tauȝte aftir hou he laborede, to ȝiue ensaumple to men aftir þat þei shulden not bilde hem castels & liue oon pore men bi beggerye. for it is boþe needeful to men to ȝiue & to take of here bretheren; but þe first condicioun is betere, & þerfore crist & poul useden it. and prelatiþ þat hauen cure of soulis loken hou scarsly þei may liue, & wiþ hou lytil of siche almes

\*[p. 83 MS.]

These words have more authority than the rules of orders, which needed the Pope's confirmation.

Paul prophesies of the new sects.

Covetousness of prelates and friars,

who are worse than day thieves.

It is better to give than to take.

Let prelates look that they live on as little as possible,

þei needen to charge þe peple, & hou largeliche þei ȝeuen and give back  
 aȝen lore and ensaumple of holynesse. þis rewle siȝ it is liberally teaching  
 bileene \*shulde be studied of alle þise sectis, & not take an \*[p. 83b MS.]  
 oþer lesse good but ȝif þat þis rewle faylede; & herfore poul [Cor. 1. [14] and  
 heriede god þat he brouȝte not in sicche sectis, but by clene iii.  
 lore þat crist tauȝte poul liuede & tauȝte oþer. studie wyse Let wise men  
 men on þis word of poul, & loke þei riȝtliche wheþer þise study these words  
 sectis ben euele & worþi to be left bi goddis lawe, & to be of Paul, and see  
 spoken aȝen sharpliche. & þerfore seyþ poul to conforte men, if these sects are  
 hou þei shulden haue mynde of cristis word, & hou crist shal evil.  
 ȝiue to men þat louen hym word & grace to reprove hem,  
 & þis word moueþ summe men to speke aȝen þise new ordris.

### Capitulum 3<sup>m</sup>.

It were to wite ouer þis what goddis lawe meneþ bi þise  
 sectis; & it semeþ to many men þat a secte is a newe ordre A sect is a new  
 bi newe patrour & newe lawe, as was þe secte of cristen men, order, with a new  
 and crist haueþ ful autorite to make sicche a blessid secte for patron and a new  
 hym & hise þat comen aftir to þe ende of þe world. ȝif rule.  
 a cristen man haue a custom þat profitiþ to hym for a tyme, Christ was the  
 but he haueþ non patrour ne rewle but crist & lore þat he founder of a new  
 haþ ȝiuen, he makij not a newe secte oþer þen secte of cristen sect,  
 men. & ȝif benet or dominic or fraunciss or bernard or angel which men should  
 of heuene make a newe secte upon cristis secte, he is herfore not leave,  
 worþi to be blamed; & þis secte shulde be despisid & cristis but keep it free  
 secte shulde be holde clene, as þe secte of macamethe takij from change.  
 meche of cristis secte, but it varieþ in som rewle & in cloþis Mahomet's sect  
 & in patrour, & so don sectis of oure newe ordris, & of boþe takes much of  
 þise prophecieþ poul. Crist groundede not his secte in sich Christ's, but  
 changyng of cloþis, but in rewle of vertues þat ben vnsensible varies, and so do  
 to men, & tolde nouȝt bi sicche abitis, but in as meche as þei these new orders.  
 helpeden to vertues, & þus men shulden not be weddid wiȝ Christ laid no  
 hem, but change hem lest here loue erre. & þus seyen summe stress on clothes,  
 þat these freris habitis to whiche freris ben þus oblishid, þat as the friars do.  
 ben þus large & variaunt as weren habitis of pharisees, \*seruen \*[p. 84 MS.]

His religion takes  
now one habit,  
now another; as  
he did on Good  
Friday.

Habits a pretence  
of holiness.

[2] Peter ii. [1.]

Let people judge  
if these sects do  
not love their  
patron better  
than Paul,  
and if their order  
does not make  
them love Christ's  
rule less.

Is he not a fool  
who changes a  
good order for  
one grievous and  
imperfect.

[3 Peter ii. 2.]

To love their  
orders more  
than Christ's  
\*[p. 845 MS.]  
is spiritual  
lechery.

þe fend to putte in lesyngus & to destrie þore mennus goodis.

Cristis religion telliþ lityl bi sicke sensible habitis, but now  
takiþ oon & now an oþer, as dide crist on good fryday. for  
þise habitis crien to þe folc holynesse & stableness, þat god  
wole haue hid to hym, & þus þei ben ofte false signes

& garnementis of ypocritis, as crist clepiþ ofte pharisees.

And þus seiþ petre in his book, þat is aboue alle þise patrouns,  
Soþeliche þer weren fals prophetis<sup>1</sup> in þe peple, as shal be in  
þou mastris of lesyngis, þat shal brynge in sectis of loss, boþe  
of religioun & soul, as men mai openliche see now, & þei  
denyen þat lord þat haþ bouȝt hem, ihesu crist. for when þei  
louen cristis secte, or louen it lasse for þise newe sectis, þei  
slaken in þis here loue to crist, & þus þei ben cursid of hym.

& iuge þe peple wheþer þise sectis louen here patrouns betere  
þen poul or oþere seyntis, þat weren betere tofore god þen  
þise patrouns, & louen lesse þe rewle of crist & cristis  
ordynaunce for here ordris, & here dedis wolen openliche  
shewe þat þei don þus wiþ-oute cause. whi shulden not þise  
sectis be reprovoun? siþ þei ben þus sectis of lesyng; not of  
leesyng of worldliche worship ne worldliche vauntage, as  
we may see, but of lesyng of vertues & of blisse for here  
vnkyndenesse. And herfore seiþ petre aftir, þat þise sectis  
leden vp-on hem hasty lesyng of vertues & blisse bi here

chargyng wiþ newe ordris. who wolde seiþ þat he ne were  
a fool þat hauede a good ordre þat myȝte not faile, & ȝit  
bryngiþ in a newe ordre þat is boþe heuy & vnþerȝit, & lettiþ  
þe first parfyte ordre boþe to be loued & holden. Juge þe  
peple wheþer þise freris bi here newenesse þat þei han  
founden breken ofte cristis ordre, boþe to hem & to þe peple.

And þus seiþ petre aftir, þat many shal sewe her lecheryes,  
bi whom þe weye of treuþe shal be blaſfemed. It is knowen  
þyng now þat many louen more þise newe ordris þen þei  
louen þe ordre of crist, & don more worship to hem, & þis is  
gostliche lecherie fro crist þe spouse of þe chirche, & þis

<sup>1</sup> propheris MS.



is opone blasfemye siþ roten ordinaunce of men is more worshipid & more told bi þen þe ordinaunce of crist. Petre telliþ aftir of þe frut þat cometh of sicke newe ordris: In <sup>[2 Peter ii. 3.]</sup> coueytise wiþ feyned wordis þei shal chaffare of þou. It is knowen hou þe pope wiþ his court chaffariþ wiþ simple men <sup>Sale of benefices and absolution.</sup> in benefices & assoilyng, & certis þis is a newe secte founden ouer þe secte of crist; & þus chaffaren possessioners bi auarice wiþ seculer men; & þise freris chaffaren now, & sillen cuntrees to begge; & in alle þise wordis ben feyned of gostliche suffrage wiþ-oute grounde. þus regneth chaffaryng of prestis and lewid men by auarice. But petre telliþ aftir to what ende þise sectis bryngyn men: "To þise sectis ceessiþ not þe iugement þat is now & bifore tymes, & here leeing nappiþ not." Noo man dredith þat haueþ witt þat petre ne reprouede here þise sectis. what cristen man shulde not speke aȝen hem bi autorite of crist & petre? ȝif petre prophesyede not þise sectis, telle þei what þe wordis of petre menen. <sup>Peter's prophecy is clearly of these sects.</sup> And of þise sectis spekiþ poul to his disciple tymothe: "þe holi gost seiþ openliche þat in þe last tymes <sup>[1] Tim. iv. [1.]</sup> summe shal depart fro bileue, takynge hede to spiritis of errour & to loris of fendis, þe wiche fendis speken lesyng in ypocrisie; hauynge here conscience brent wiþ hoot yren of coueytise; & forfenden to wedde, & abstenen fro mete, þat god haþ ordeyned to trewe men to take wiþ þankyngis of god, & to hem þat han knowe trewþe." Here ilche man on goddis half shulde trowe þise wordis of poul, siþ god seiþ hem openliche to hym. & þus it semeth þat poul wolde mene þat <sup>Paul's words refer to these orders.</sup> in tymes of þise ordris men departen fro bileue þat þei shulden haue of cristis ordre, & many taken ouer-mechē hede to gostliche men of þise ordris, þat erren as ypocritis & magnifien here owen ordris. & non drede sicke seniours ben fendis þat speken lying in ypocrisie, & þei hauen here conscience brent wiþ fier of coueytise, for al þat þei may gete to here ordre, of men or of worldliche goodis, þei þenken þei geten newe to god, þat god is wel payed þerwiþ, & þus þise ypocritis \*letten to wedde boþe of prestis & of nunnes, & bi <sup>[p. 85 MS.]</sup>

pis þei fallen in foul lecherie, leuyng þat þat god haþ  
 grauntid; & þus þise freris forberen fleshe þat crist vsede  
 & grauntede to ete. & þus þes newe observauncis don harm  
 [2] Tim. iii. [5.] to þe chiroche many weyes. & þis applieþ poul to sectis þat  
 hauen licnesse of pitee, but þei denyen þe vertu þer-of; for  
 þei hauen non conscience to robbe pore men to magnifie here  
 new ordris, & to fordo cristis ordinaunce; but hou deneyen  
 not þise men þe vertu of pitee to god and man?

### Capitulum 4<sup>m</sup>.

See we what James seiþ þat wroot to tuelue kynredis, & so  
 to alle cristen men, wheþer he speke ouht of freris. but þif  
 god spake here of freris, certis þei ben not wiþ hym, & crist  
 seiþ: "who þat is not wiþ me, he mot neede be aȝen me."  
 Matt. xii. [30.] James i. [27.] James telliþ of two religions; þe first is clene wit-oute wem,  
 & þis mot nede be cristis religioun, boþe for þe patroun &  
 þe rewele; þe secounde is veyn religioun, & þat haueþ oþer  
 patroun and rewele. James seiþ þat clene religioun &  
 wiþoute wem bifore god & þe fader is þis, to visite moderlees  
 children & widewis in here tribulacion, & kepe hym silf wiþ-  
 The pure religion of which James  
 speaks, is that  
 which Christ or-  
 dained.  
 oute wem fro foulyng of þis world. James spekiþ not heere  
 of þe ordris þat holden here castels or liuen as ankeris, but of  
 þe religioun þat crist haþ ordeyned to fite wiþ þe world  
 & profite to needi men, as crist dide wiþ hise apostlis. And  
 þif þou seiþ þat freris visiten modirlees children & widewis;  
 soþeliche þe fend visitiþ men, but to deceyue hem & harme  
 hem; & þus þise freris visiten men, but riche men in heere  
 Friars visit, but  
 it is the rich;  
 welfare. And cristis ordre biddiþ men to kepe hem vnfouliþ  
 fro þe world, but freris seldem or neuere but when coueytise  
 fouliþ hem; for when þei visiten pore men or widewis, þei  
 or, if the poor, it  
 is to get from  
 them what they  
 can ill spare.  
 don to gete goodus of hem, as corn, monee, chese or som-what  
 þat nedliþ more hem þen þe freris; & þus þei helpen hem not  
 in tribulacioun, but to deceyue here bodi & soule. & herfore  
 seiþ iames affir, þat rewle or wisdom of þise ordris is  
 James iii. 15. The wisdom of  
 these orders is  
 earthly, sensual,  
 devilish.  
 worldliche, beestliche, & fendliche, & þis is veyn religioun.

þe rewele is first worldliche, \*for þei ben ouercomen of þe world, & speche of men plesij hem not but ȝif it turne hem to worldis vynyng, & sich a rewele mot neede ouercome þe flesh of siche freris, for þei seken lust as bestis, & coneyten likyngis of flesh. & þis rewele is þe deuelis; as þe deuel is here patroun in þis, “& þere,” seiþ James, “is enuye & strif where sich a veyn religion regneth.” But þe rewele of clene religioun haueþ eyȝt condiciouns þat iames telliþ. “first it is chast, pesible, temperat, tretable;<sup>1</sup> assentyng to goode þingis, þer-wiþ ful of mercy, ful of goode fruytis, & iugij wiþ-oute feynyng.” Juge wise men wheþer þise eyȝte ben kept in þe ordris of freris. Bodiliche chastite is ofte broken, but ofters chastite of soule; ffreris fiȝten in mong hem silf, & helpen to fiȝte aȝen reeaumus; ffreris haueþ a newe maner in alle þe dedis þat þei don heere, but þe old maner was ful good þat crist ȝaf to hise disciplis. Þe apostlis weren so tretable, þat ȝif men tauȝten hem a betere ordre or þat ouȝt of here bileene were fals, þei wolden sone assente to treuþe; but þis þing myȝte not be, for stablenesse of here patroun. ffreris mai be pleylich conuict boþe of here ordre & heere treuþe, & ȝit heere pride lettij hem to assente<sup>2</sup> to þis treuþe, boþe of here ordris & heere opiniouns; but þei seken mannes help & fals dilayes to lette knowyng of treuþe, & þus þei consenten not to good, but bi heere power striuen aȝen it. And when þei spoyleþ pore men, þei ben not ful of mercy, but louen betere stoness of heere housis þen pore men or oþere freris. Hem wantij good fruyt, when þei pursewen trewe preȝtis bi gabbyngis & bi gylis for þei prechen freliche þe gospel. flateriȝ þat þise men vsen telliþ þat þei iugen not wiþ-oute feynyng. Þis is þe veyn religioun þat James spekiþ of; “for who euere weneþ þat he be religiose, & refreneþ not his tunge, but deceyueþ his herte, þis mannes religion is veyn.” Þise freris ben dounbe in many placis when \*þei shulde speke to heere brethoren of þe treuþe of goddis lawe & oþere weyes þat helpen to vertues; but when þei comen out of þis prisoun

James iii. [17.]  
The eight conditions of the rule of pure religion

not kept by the friars.

Apostles were willing to learn.

Friars strive to prevent the truth being known.

This is the vain religion of which James speaks. [James i. 26.]

\*[p. 86 MS.]  
These friars are dumb when they should speak,

<sup>1</sup> tretatable MS.

<sup>2</sup> assento MS.

but ready to tell lies. *pei ben dilaay in heere tungis in gabbyngis & other iapis þat sounen not to charite : Juge men wheþer ony freris ben siche þat hauen sich veyn religion. James telliþ aftir bi cristis rewele þat men shulden not accepte persones ; but men seyen þat freris don, boþe of here breþeren & oþer men, for ȝif a frere be a maister or a riche frere in mong hise breþeren, he shal be loutid & worshipid more þen cristis lawe techiþ ; & þus freris worshipen secular lordis, to gete worldliche help of hem. & þus freris speken bi goddis lawe, but þei don euen þe reuers, as crist seiþ of pharisees, þat þei seyen but þei don not. þus freris reden in goddis lawe, þat þei shal not be makid maystris, & þis þei coueyten wiþ þe synne, wherfore þis maystirship is forfendid. & þus iames forbediþ cristen men to be riche here, for rust & wormes destrien heere richesse, & þat doiþ harm to þe comunes ; but ȝit þise freris gederen monee & oþer goodis to hem self, & ben propre in heere hauyng aȝen þe rewle of charite, & but ȝif þise wordis of iames don for þise ordris, I am certeyn þat non word of iames approueþ þise newe religions.*

[James ii. 9.] *Friars are ac-centers of per-sons.*

*They speak by God's law, but do the reverse ;*

*covet to be masters,*

James v. [1-3.]

*and to heap up riches.*

### Capitulum 5<sup>m</sup>.

*Se we ouer þis what iude seiþ of apostataes of þise ordris, hou þei weren first punyshid of god in tyme of þe old lawe. for cristis religioun lastiþ euer, boþe to þe dai of dom & aftir, & alle þise newe religiouns moten haue ende þenne or bifore. Jude seiþ þat þise apostataas ben in heere metis filþis, þat feeden men wiþ-oute drede, feedyng hem self ; & þus freris, for heere metis þat þei hauen of lordis & bishopis, feeden heere soulis aȝen bi fablis, & ben a-boute to hyde heere synnes, but certis largenesse of heere abitis hydij not synnes fro god. þei mai blynde men for a tyme bi here feyned absolucions, but whenne men shal rekene bifore crist in day of his last iugement, þere þise habitis shal be a weye, \* þise rewelis & þise religiouns, & religion of cristis lawe shal shyne þen-ne for kepyng þer-of ; for ypocritis shal be depperst dampned of alle þe fendis þat shal be in helle. Jude seiþ*

Jude 12.

*Friars, for the meat they have of lordis, feed their souls with fables. Their habits cannot hide sins from God,*

\*[p. 865 MS.] since they will be away at the judgment day.

aftir, þat þise men ben cloudis wiþ-oute watir, þat ben boren Clouds without water  
 aboute wiþ wyndis; & þis a-cordiþ to fals preestis, for  
 philosophis seyn bi resoun þat it is eir of pestilence when it pestilential,  
 semeþ to reyne & reyneþ not, as it falliþ bi sicke cloudis, for  
 þei letten þe lijt of heuene & temperen not þe erþe bi reyn.  
 & þus it falliþ gostliche bi men þat shulden preche goddis such are men that should preach and do not.  
 lawe, & letten to teche þis lawe, & occupien sicke prelatiþ  
 state bi gabbyng & fagyngis, & not bi reyn of goddis word;  
 & þis is a perilose tyme of pestilence of mannes soule. Jude  
 seiþ aftir þat þise ben heruest trees wiþoute fruyt, twyes Trees without fruit,  
 deed, & þe rootis ben drawen up; & þus þei ben hydous trees.  
 þis word shulde be dred of prelatiþ, siþ þei ben trees in þis  
 world; & þei shulden bere gostliche fruyt as don oþer trees in such are prelates that bear no spiritual fruit. Mat. xxi. [19.]  
 heruest, but þei ben wiþoute fruyt, as was þe fyge tree þat  
 orist cursede, for neþer in prechyng ne good lyf þei profiten to  
 þe peplis soule. And þus þei ben twyes dede, deed body &  
 soule, deed in þis world & in þe oþer, deed in heere owen  
 persone, deed in profityng to oþer men. And heere rootis ben  
 turned up; for heere loue shulde be hid, & bi growyng of þis  
 roote þei shulden profite to mennes soulis; but þif heere loue  
 be ficchid on worldliche þingis more þen on heuenliche þingis,  
 þe rote is turned up, & þei ben drye, wiþoute fruyt. Wheþer  
 þat freris or oþere men failen þus in heere office, iude  
 prophecyde of hem, al þif þey weren not in his tyme; for as  
 petre seiþ, "cristis apostlis haueden clere spirit to prophecie." [2 Peter i. 19(?)]  
 And þise men ben boren aboute bi wyndis of vnstabilnesse, & Borne about by winds,  
 heyhid to grete statis, now here & now þere, for hem wantiþ since they want the root of love.  
 þe rote of loue þat shulde be picchid in goddis lawe, & þus  
 wyndus mouen not þise trees to growe stableliche in þe  
 chirche. Jude seiþ aftir, þat þise ben flodis of þe wood see, Floods of the raging sea froth-  
 þat froþen heere owen confusions. \*It is knowen þat holi \*[p. 87 MS.]  
 chirche is a ship in þe see, & þing þat moost noyþ þis ship ing their own confusion;  
 ben felle flodis of þis world; & þif freris haue þise two, noo  
 drede, god vnderstood hem here, & þif þei froþen bi irose fisege  
 ajen men þat tellen hem treuþe, noo drede þei froþen heere such are friars that are angry with those who tell them truth.  
 owen confusion, & maken heere malice more knowen. & but

ȝif iude spak here of freris he spak in noo place of þise sectis.  
 Lord, siȝ crist & hiȝe apostlis spaken sharpliche aȝens mennes  
 synnes, & þei bidden þat we shulden sewe hem, whi shulden  
 we not so speke aftir? ȝif a man be in despeyer of malice of  
 þis wood see or þat men shal be helpid fro it, þenne is it noo  
 boote hym to speke aȝen; but men hopen bi goddis grace wiȝ  
 sich sharp speche & trewe, þat somme freris shal be amendid,  
 & þe peple shal knowe hem betere. And þus seiȝ Jude aftir,  
 þat þise men ben erryng steris, to whom þe tempest of  
 derkenesse is kept wiȝouten ende. It is knowen bi philoso-  
 phis þat þe sterre herid or beerdid erriȝ fro heuene in his  
 mouyng, & bitokeneȝ pestilence, & so it is of wickid prestis  
 þat erren fro kepyng of goddis lawe. & þus ȝif freris wolen  
 excuse hem þat iude spekiȝ not of hem, þei moten excuse hem  
 first þat þei liuen not wickidliche, for euere men weren  
 holden bi goddis lawe to speke aȝen goddis aduersaries. And  
 herfore seiȝ iude aftir, þat "enoc þe seuene persone fro  
 adam prophecied of siche wickid men: lo, god comeȝ in hiȝe  
 þousynd seyntis to make iugement aȝen alle wickid, & to  
 reprove alle wickid men of al þe werkis of heere wickidnesse  
 in whiche þei diden wickidliche; & of alle hard þyngis bi  
 whiche wickid men han spoken aȝen god." Men moten oȝer  
 denye god, or seye þat fro þe bigynnyng of þe world it was  
 leueful to reprove wickid men. Whi shulden not men reprove  
 siche freris? siȝ god haȝ ordeyned many þousynd to mayn-  
 tene his cause aȝen þe fend. And herfore seiȝ iude aftir,  
 hou men shal knowe siche pseudoes. "þise ben gruccheris,  
 ful of pleynt, wandringe oftir heere desyris, & here mouȝ  
 spekiȝ pride, makinge \*persones wondirful bi cause of here  
 wyynyng." ȝif freris ben not spoken of here þei moten liue  
 þus iustliche, þat þei grucche not aȝen here pouerte bi þe  
 cryng of here beggyngis. And ȝif alle heere clopis tallen to  
 men þat þei ben needi beggers, & þei wolen take of pore &  
 riche al maner of godis þat þei mai gete, þenne þei ben fals  
 & ful of playnt of þe pouerte þat þei han chosen. And ȝif  
 freris after þis feyned pouerte wandren in reumes aftir here

Men hope by re-  
proof to amend  
some friars and  
to open people's  
eyes.

Wandering stars.

Nature of comets,  
they betoken  
pestilence;  
such are wicked  
priests.

Enoch's  
prophecy.

The false friars  
come up to Jude's  
description;  
murmurers, etc.

\* [p. 876 MS.]

Their begging is  
a complaint of  
poverty.

They wander  
after their own  
lusts.

lustis, & chesen to ete wiþ riche men where þei may fare lustfulliche, & haue heere daliaunce wiþ wymmen for here lecherouse lyues; who dredij þat god ne spak here bi iude of þise freris? And ȝif þei speken proudliche to men of heere ordris & of here persones; hou þei passen oþere ordris & oþer persones bifore hem in holynesse & in witt; & þus glosen persones wondirful, boþe of heere ordris & wiþ-oute, bi cause of heere wynnyng, who dredij þat god ne spak here of siche freris þat don þus? And iude moueþ cristen men aftir to be war & reprove siche men: "But ȝee, ful dere breþeren, haue mynde of þe wordis þat weren seyð byfore of þe apostlis of oure lord ihesu crist, þat han seyð to ȝou, þat in þe laste tymes shal come gilours wandring aftir heere desyris, not in good religion. Þise ben þei þat departen hem silf bestial, & hauen not þe holy goost." Juge men wheþer freris ben siche; & certis þenne god spak here of hem, for god woot al þing þat is to come, & warneþ his chirche of perilis of it. ȝif þise freris ben gylours boþe of men & of children, bi þe holynesse þat þei biheeten to robbe men of heere goodis, & wandren in cuntrees aftir heere desyris, to placis & persones where þei hopen to fare aftir lustis of heere flesh, þenne god spak heere of freris. And ȝif freris departen heere duellyng fro oþere men, boþe lerid & lewid, & wandren not as crist or hise apostlis, more to edifie þe peple þen for lust or worldliche wynnyng, þenne god spak here of hem. liue þe freris bi goddis lawe & teche þei men þat þei ben not siche.

They speak proudly of themselves and their orders.

This prophecy is of friars. God warned his church of dangers to come.

### Capitulum 6<sup>m</sup>.

\*Jon enuangelist spak sharpliche of þis matere, boþe in epistel of his wisdom & in his book of priuetees; but for he spekiþ þere mystiliche, & fewe wolen þere approue his sentence,<sup>1</sup> þerfore leue we þis book, & speke we a word of hise epistlis. Ion seiþ in his book hou alle men shulden kepe charite, & so men shulden

[p. 88 MS.]  
Witness of St.  
John in his  
epistles.

<sup>1</sup> sentence MS.

Men should love  
things according  
to their goodness,  
but they love ac-  
cording to the  
order.

loue þingis affir þat þei ben goode. But here þenken somme þat freris failen openliche, for bi graunte of hem self oþere ordris ben betere þen heeren, & ȝit þei louen more here owen þen þei don þe betere ordris. as ȝif men askeden of þise fours sectis wheþer alle þise ordris ben euene goode, þei wolen seye anon: "nay, but oon is betere þen an oþer;" & þus bi here owen speche þey tellen þat þey leuen þe betere and louen persones of here ordre not euene affir þat þei ben goode, & so þis diuision of freris bi þise ordris þat ben not groundid makij a priuee enuye and puttij out loue of god; but certis þenne þei

[1] John iii. [15.]

When they  
preach they show  
love for worldly  
goods.

They appeal not  
to God's law, but  
to stories and  
bulls.

[1] John ii. [18.]

ben mansleers & of þe fendis religion, for ion seiþ þat ilche man þat hatij his broþer is mansleer. & þus it semeþ of heere lyues, þat many of hem ben irregular; & þus in trauel of þise freris, When þei wandren aboute to preche, it semeþ þat þei louen more worldliche goodis þen heelpe of soulis þat þei visiten; & who dredij þat siche ordris ne ben brouȝt in bi þe fend? þei leuen to proue bi goddis lawe heyȝnesse of þingis þat þei preysen so; but bi talis. byneþe bileue, & bi bull of þe pope þei prouen heyȝnesse of heere patroun & holynesse of here ordre. & þus seiþ ion soþeliche þat þer ben now many makid anticristis; for alle þise men þat ben aȝen crist in here loue, þei louen not moost crist of alle þingis þat ben. but þise men louedon more crist, ȝif þei haueden oonliche crist here patroun; for vnordynel love of here patroun departij hem fro hool loue of crist; & þus þei hauen not god here fadir, but somme patroun byneþe god; & þenne þei ben anticristis and fendis children, as ion seiþ. & þus seiþ ion, þat ilche spirit þat lousij ihesu is not of god \*but antecrist, & þus þer ben pseudo-prophetis now in þis laste hour brouȝt in.

[1] John iv. 3.]

\*[p. 888 MS.]

Various ways of  
leaving hold of  
Christ.

Men may louse ihesu crist on many maneres aȝens god, as he þat trowij not of crist þat he is boþe god & man, but trowij þe oon not þe other, lousij crist aȝen bileue. and þise men lousen crist þat maken hise membris heere special patrouns, & leuen to haue crist oonliche heere patroun, werbi þei louen lasse crist. & þise men lousen crist þat, bi heere prechyng or heere lif, maken þat crist is vnstableliche in mennes hertis



where he was bifore. & boþe freris and oþer prestis lousen crist on many maneres, & þus men haue of holy writ þe names þat þei putten oon freris. Ion telliþ in his secunde epistle hou men shulden leue siche antecristis, & not receyue hem in-to heere housis ne greete hem in þe weie; & in mong alle þe remedies þat god spak aȝen siche men, þis is a special remedie of god, to which ilche man is holdon. for ion seiþ <sup>2 John [11.]</sup> þat what man seiþ heyl to siche antecristis shal haue part of heere werkis for assent þat he ȝiueþ. & meche more ȝif a man norisshe hem wiþ hise goodis, or defende hem in worde & dede, for þenne he defendiþ cristis enmyes; & certis bi lawe þat men vsen þenne he is traitour to crist; & þis perile shulden men flee more þen perele of mannes lawe. & herfore biddiþ ion þat "men shulden assaye siche priuee men, wheþer <sup>1 John iv. [1.]</sup> þei ben on goddis side," for mony siche ben antecristis. & bi certeyn rewele of ion, ȝif ony siche louse crist, he is þat ilke þat men shulden fle, boþe in speche & in lyf. & þus ȝif it were wel studied ouer, mony of þise newe ordris shulden be þus fled as antecristis for diuision þat þei maken; & þus bi alle þe autours þat ben in þe newe lawe men shulden speke þus aȝen freris, when þei don þus aȝen crist. & it were al oon to men to lette þis in word or dede & to destrie bileue þat god haþ ȝinen in þe newe lawe. but as it is seyð bifore men shulden kepe hem in goddis boundis & kepe treuþe & good entent; & þus for charite of þe chirche & of freris speke þise wordis; \* & certis þise wordis ben soþe, & ilche man shulde graunte hem. But oon errour is in þis matere when freris continuen in heere synne, & iugen to what entent oþer men seien þise treuþis to hem. But here þise wordis ben suspect for many resouns of goddis lawe. It is propre to god to iuge entent þat man haueþ; what fendis ben þei þat taken on hem to what entent a man spekiþ. Certis alle þe fendis in helle kunnen not see a mannes entent, & men shulden not in þis hye hem aboue fendis but ȝif god hadde beden hem þis. & þus men shewen hem nakid of resoun; when þat noon of hem kan proue þat þis sentence þat men seyen is fals bi goddis

Friars and other priests do this.

A supporter of Antichrist is a traitor to Christ.

Thus we have cited all authors of the new law to justify reproof of friars.

\*[p. 89 MS.]

Friars attribute bad intentions to their reprovers.

God is the Judge of intent.

The friars are like  
the Pharisees

who spoke ill of  
Christ's works,

because he broke  
holiday, etc.

lawe, but trewe & sewyng of bileue, þey shewen ferrers hou  
þei ben disciplis of fals pharisees, þe whiche hauden þis  
maner when þei myȝten not denye cristis dedis, þat þei ne  
weren goode in hem self & ful of myraclis & grace of god, þei  
depraueden þe maner of doying, & þus crist in hise dedis. þei  
seyden som tyme þat crist was not on goddis syde, but wiȝ þe  
fend, for he kepte not his haliday in doying of siche myraclis.  
Othere seyden þat crist dide þise wondris in þe vertu of  
beelzebub. & þus þei casteden to deprauē crist when þei  
myȝten not forsake þe treuþe; & þus þei shewen hem luciferis  
children þat wolen not amende hem self, but studien hou þei  
may deprauē men þat tellen hem treuþe to here good.

### Capitulum 7<sup>m</sup>.

The devil's clergy  
say that we make  
ourselves even  
with God,

while we are sin-  
ful,

We acknowledge  
our sin,

•[p. 895 MS.]  
but believe our-  
selves Christ's  
servants,

and what we say  
profitable to the  
Church.

Bvt here grucchen þe fendis clerkis þat þus accusen men,  
& seyn þat þei ben clene of þis. But we ben coupable in þis  
synne; for we maken vs euene wiȝ crist, & trowen oure wordis  
as we weren god, & forsaken þat we erren in entent as seyntis  
in heuene, but oure dedis & oure lif shewen openliche þe con-  
trarie. Here we graunten mekeliche þat in þis & al oure lif  
here we erren ofte & faylen in þe heynesse of charite, & her-  
fore we weylen here þat we synnen þus in þis lif. & þus we  
wolen not be euene wiȝ crist, but trow þat \*we ben hise  
synneful seruauntis, & in vertu & worschip of hym we seyen  
þe trewþe þat he haȝ tauȝt; & ofte we erren in entent &  
desyren veniaunce in rancour, but we ben war þat we seyn  
soȝ & profitable to cristis chirche; & when þat god ȝueȝ vs  
grace we leuen errour of þis entent, & witen þat we shulden  
not leue here for crepyng in of siche synnes, siȝ we shulden  
synne more leuyng to speke sharpliche þis. & þus bi process  
of tyme we trowen þat god wole clenese oure entent, & þus  
when we ben in quiete we don þis moost for goddis worship, &  
also for profit of his chirche, & for good þat freris mai haue.  
Wel we witen of oure bileue þat we shulden sewe crist, but  
he reprocude men sharpliche þat diden þus aȝen god; whi

shulden not we do so, siþ we graunten vs cristis disciplis ?  
 Petre þaf counsel to crist þat he shulde not þus suffre deþþ, as Mat. xvi. [22, 23.] Christ's example.  
 crist tolde bifore þat he wolde; but crist seyde aȝen to petre,  
 for charite þat he hauede to hym: "Go bihynde me, Sathanas;  
 for þou sauerist not þe treuþe of god." Here may we see  
 openliche hou crist lettede not for loue of petre to reprove Christ reproved Peter, though he loved him.  
 hym sharpliche; whi may not men do so to freris, ȝif þei  
 trespassen more openliche & to more harm of cristis chirche.  
 Also we may see in þise wordis hou we ben holden to sewe  
 crist, & to suffre peynes of oure body for more good of oure  
 soule, & herfore bad crist petre here: "go aftir me Sathanas."  
 Men þat wolen aboue cristis lore not sewe hym but go bifore  
 ben sathanas, as petre was, but crist reproveþ þis in petre. Matt. vii. [15.]  
 also crist telliþ þat "men shulden fle fro fals prophetis," & telliþ Christ's warning against false prophets.  
 two condicions bi whiche men shulden knowe hem; first "þei  
 comen in cloþis of sheep," for ypocritis bigilen men bi þis.  
 Aftir "þei ben wolues of raueyn," siþ for worldliche goodis þei  
 feynen holynesse. & crist seyþ aftir hou men shal knowe  
 hem bi þe fruytis þat comen of hem. ȝif freris shewen bi  
 here dedis þat þei ben sicke fals prophetis, \* & cristis chirche \*[p. 90 MS.]  
 be harmed by hem, whi shulden not men teche here gylis ?  
 boþe for loue of cristen men, & for loue of þe freris; siþ crist  
 biddiþ, þat "ȝif þin brother synneþ in þee, þou shalt snybbe  
 hym." Othere we moten forsake crist, or telle here sharpliche Matt. xviii. [15.]  
 as he haþ tauȝt. & þus we reden þat crist aftir þat he was Christ's reproof to the disciples at Emmaus.  
 risen fro deed reproveþ sharpliche hise disciplis for here  
 defeaute in bileene: "O foolis, & slow to trowe in þingis þat Luke xxiv. [25.]  
 prophetis han seyð ofte." Lord, siþ crist reproveþ þus hise  
 disciplis for loue of hem, and clepede hem foolis & slow to  
 trowe, why may not men bi lore of crist reprove more foolis  
 for more perile? & þis men shulden do sharpliche, for softe  
 wordis mouen not þise men. And marc telliþ þat crist spak Mark iii. [21.]  
 so sharpliche þat somme of hise disciplis seyden þat crist bi  
 hise dedis was turned in-to woodnesse, & þus many men for  
 sich slowþe of sharp reprovyng synnen meche, for sharp Usefulness of sharp words.  
 wordis byten ofte where soft speche shulde not moue; & þus

- 1 Sam. iii. 13. men seyen þat hely þe hey; prest was dampned, for he re-  
proued hise sones but to softliche & slowliche; & in þis  
synnen mony men, & herfore freris shulden loke wheþer þei  
ben coupable in þis synne, & amende hem sone þerof, & iuge  
John vii. [24.] not by facis of men, for crist biddiþ: "Ne wole þee iuge  
aftir þe face, but iuge þee iust iugement of þingis þat þee  
Isaiah vi. [5.] knowen wel." & herfore seiþ ysaie: "Wo is me for I heelde  
[Ezekiel iii. 18.] myn pees." and god seyþ to ezechiell, "siþ he haþ ȝiuen hym  
offys & wit, but ȝif he telle men peril & synne he shal be  
dampned for þis synne." & þis moueþ somme men; siþ god<sup>1</sup>  
ȝiuen hem witt & power, lest þey disusen ȝift of god, þei vsen  
1 Cor. ix. [16.] it when nede is; & þus seiþ poul: "Wo is me ȝif i præche  
not," & telle þe peple heere synnes. & herfore god biddiþ his  
prophete to telle his peple heere foule synnes. & þus seiþ  
poul to tite, þe bisshop, "reproue þou wiþ al comaundement,"  
Tytus 3<sup>o</sup>. [should be ii. 15.]  
2 Tim. iv. [2.] & poul biddiþ tymothe to reproue, to preie & to blame, \*but  
\*[p. 90b MS.] couenabliche & wiþoute ceesyng. poul biddiþ hym reproue  
men, & þus men shulden not blame herfore, but ȝif þei  
fordiden goddis lawe, & excuseden men at domes day of reprof  
þat god wole ȝiue; but þis blasfemye dar not freris seye; &  
Two sects— herfor men wolen trowe goddis lawe. Tuo sectis þer ben, &  
þe oon reproueþ synne hardliche, & þis secte approueþ crist in  
word & dede; þe oþere secte hidith<sup>2</sup> synne as antecrist & hise  
clerkis. & noo drede þe firste secte is cristis lore, & þe oþer þe  
The first, Christ's, reproveth sin;  
fendis; & for þe firste secte deyede crist & bi hym alle hise  
apostlis, & þis þey tauȝten in worde, as we han told ofte  
the second, that hides sin, is lately renewed.  
bifore. þe secounde secte þat hydiþ synne was in tyme of  
boþe goddis lawis, but now it is late renewelid in þe tyme of  
þise newe ordris; but noo man shulde trowe hem here, as noo  
man shulde be frere but ȝif bi impossible god tolde man þat  
he shulde make hym a frere; & þis hidyng is clepid pees  
þat crist com not to sende in erþe, but to depart worldliche  
frendis for more loue þat men shulden haue to god. & þus  
ȝif men shulden leue to reproue til þei weren clene wiþ-oute

Hiding sin is the peace that Christ came not to send.

We need not wait to be sinless before reproving.

<sup>1</sup> haþ probably omitted.

<sup>2</sup> biddeth MS.

synne, þey shulden neuer reproue here, siþ apostlis weren not wiþ-outen synne; but goddis lawe dampneþ þis, þat men shulden reproue a synne & wiþ þis synne more in þe synne þat þei reprouen. & þus kepe we vs fro grette synnes; & speke we wyseliche aȝen open synne; & who þat seyþ aȝen þis, he is on þe fendis syde. hou sharpliche þat men shulden speke aȝen synne, & bi what ordre, god mo teche, for hid synne þat man is inne lettij hym ofte to kunne þis lore. Wel I woot þat crist & baptist reproueden men for here synne & clepeden hem kyndlyngis of eddris; & god woot wheþer men ben now worse. lyue we wel, & triste we to god þat he wole ȝiue vs *concel* in þis, & haue we euere oure hertis to hym, and comune entent to plesse hym!

God must teach  
us how to re-  
prove.

### Capitulum 8<sup>m</sup>.

It were to wite ouer þe falshede of euidentis þat þe fend haþ brouht in to loue hise newe ordris. al ȝif loue be good ȝif it be clene in crist, ȝit vnordinel loue groundid in falshed is noyose \*to men for many enchesouns. ¶ Sixe euidentis makyþ þe fend to loue þus hise ordris. ffirst for heere habitis; þat þei ben passyngliche holy, here gurdliis & al here atier þat fallij to hem, & ilche man loueþ kyndeliche holynesse of his broþer. But here shulden men wite þat holynesse is in þe soule & in noon bodiliche þing but ȝif hit springe fro þat, & ȝit it is lytil or nouȝt but ȝif it be groundid in treuþe. But men han told ofte þe cause whi þat siche atieris myȝten profite. Boþe colours & figuris ben shapen to deceyue þe folc, to suppose þat þei ben holy þat haue siche signes wiþ-oute; but crist biddij þat mennus holynesse be hid fro siche signes. & so þe offys of hem, who so vndirstondiþ hem wel, is to shewe heere ypocrisie & to hyde heere synnes wiþ-inne forþ. & herfore seiþ crist of pharisees þat “þei ben blaunschid sepulchris.” lord, what helpij wydnese of habitis of þise ordris? it semeþ þat to þise tuo bi cast of þe fend; ffirst to make hem more hidliche to breede hem grete balyes,

\*[p. 91 MS.]  
The fiend gives  
six evidences  
why these orders  
should be loved:  
1. Their dress.

Matt. xxiii. [27.]

Use of wide  
habits,  
to hide their big  
bellies,

and to waste  
God's goods.

The clothes are a  
cover for hypo-  
cristy.

\*[p. 91b MS.]

Second deceit of  
the fiend;  
That such orders  
abstain from good  
meat.

They do not all  
abstain,

some have too  
much and some  
too little.

Their rule con-  
trary to the  
Apostles';

for many of siche ordris hauen heere balyes for heere god.  
þe secunde cause of þis wydnesse is wastyng of goddis good;  
for alle goodis of þis world ben goodis of god þe cheef lord,  
& he giueþ hem to hise pore men þat seruen hym treweliche.  
& so ilche þreed of siche cloþis þat ben tuo wast & too  
costliche berij wij hym a wrong boþe to god & man, &  
specialliche when þise cloþis ben too riche & costliche. ȝif  
þise cloþis ben gurde & more large in widnesse, þei beren on  
hem more synne, for more ypocrisie in hem. And knottis þat  
bitokenen penaunce hongynge bifors fro þe bodi ben signes of  
ypocrisie & noon oþer holynesse; & þus widnesse of siche  
cloþis is an hord to hyde synnes, as gabbyngis & ypocrisie, ȝif  
it be not superflue. & trowyng of holynesse of hem bryngij  
in many heresies, þat þise cloþis ben more hooly þen weren  
þe cloþis of crist. Siþ pilat myȝte haue be dampned al  
ȝif he hadde dyed in cristis cloþis. & þus þise habitis of  
þe newe ordris bleren þe eyen of þe peple & \*hyden heere  
priuey robberye, & oþer good don þei but lytel; but ȝif þei  
verifyen iudis wordis, þat siche ben trees turned vpsodoun,  
for roote & inward of hem ben shewid wij-oute to þe world,  
and falsnesse of here entent is hid fro men bi þis turnyng.  
it shulde be knowen to cristen men þat alle siche sensible  
signes ben not signes of hoolynesse, but ȝif þei maken hooly-  
nesse in men. ¶ Þe secunde deceyte of þe fend bi whiche he  
bigyliþ simple men stondij in þis; þat siche ordris lyuen  
scars fro good mete, & so scarsnesse of heere foode tellij to  
men þat þei ben hooly. But here men seyen to þe fend þat  
þise signes ben ofte false, for many of þise newe ordris liuen  
lustfulliche in heere foode & þat men mai see wel bi growyng  
& colour of here body. but þis may falle ofte tymes þat  
summe breþeren of þise ordris faylen ouer-meeche in mete &  
drynk, & summe ben too wel fed bi vneueene partyng of here  
goodis; & so þis poynt of siche ordris stondij in þise two  
þingis, þat where rewel of apostlis was to haue alle þingis  
in comune & be partid to ilche as he hauede nede, þise ordris  
don þe contrarie; & so siþ apostlis rewel was good, spring-

ynge of gooddis wille, þis rewele mot nede be euel & come of  
 lawe of lucifer. þe secunde fruyt of þis delyng stondiþ in it comes from Lucifer.  
 þis poynt, þat siche etyng is priuee & hid fro oþere breþeren,  
 & so it askiþ priuee housis & priuee seruice to performe it.  
 & þus when holynesse shulde be hid, & lustliche foode shulde  
 be exilid, þis delyng doiþ þe *contrarie* & comeþ of þe fend  
 heere patroun. & þus þei don not oonliche in þis partyng  
 wrong to heere owen breþeren, but to pore men wiþoute þise They wrong their brethren and the poor.  
 ordris whom þei spoylen of heere goodis. & se, when crist  
 biddit hise disciplis to ete & dryngke þe metis þat ben in  
 folc þat thei comen to, þise ordeynen þe *contrarie*, þat þei  
 haue propre foode for heere mouþ þat passiþ ofte þe \*boundis \*[p. 92 MS.]  
 of resoun. & þus when siche ordris han forsake propertee  
 & take al in comune, þei aȝen heere owne ordre hauen heere  
 properte in lust, & comunete in simple foode is forþeden bi  
 here ordre, & poul meneþ to tymothe þat sich is blasfeme [1 Tim. iv. 3.]  
 abstinence. ¶ þe þridde deceyt of þise ordris is þat þei passen  
 oþere in preyeris, boþe for tyme þei preyen & for multitude  
 of hem. Who shulde not bye dore siche preyeris? siþ þei  
 bryngen men swiftliche to heuene; & oþer men when þei  
 slepen on nyȝtis hauen of hem preyeris at mydnyȝt, þat crien  
 devowteliche on god bi clere voys, stif & clene. Here men  
 seyen þat in þis poynt many seculers ben deceyued, for þise  
 ordris witen not wheþer þat þei shal come to heuene, & so  
 wheþer þat heere preyeris profiten to hem or any oþer man. They cannot tell whether they will go to heaven.  
 hou is heere conscience brent, þat þei dar þus sille siche  
 preyeris; & algatis siþ it is *proprid* to god to parte *meritis*  
 as hym likiþ, & noon man may approue hise *meritis* but as  
 god iugiþ þat it is worþi; & þus þis *prayer* of þise ordris is  
 of a nest of blasfemye & chaffaryng of fendis *prayer* bi þe  
 craft of symonye. & where þei maken hem a rewele to ryse  
 reweleliche at mydnyȝt, þei passen crist & david & þe ordy-  
 nauce of þe godhede<sup>1</sup>; for god vndisposiþ ofte tymes men to  
 ryse þus at mydnyȝt, & askiþ of hem a betere lif, þat þei  
To sell their prayers shows their seared conscience.  
Rule of rising at midnight  
not always profitable.

<sup>1</sup> goghede MS.

putten of bi heere statute. Crist duelled in prayere al þe nyȝt, but bi hym silf wiþoute sicke couentis; & so þise ordris holden not cristis rewele neþer in tyme ne in stide, for crist preyede wiþoute sicke crynge, lyk to þe state of innocence, bi hym self vndir þe cope of heuene. Sicke risyng may som tyme do good & ofte it doiþ yuel; & þus to

To make rules without God's leave is presumption.

[1] Kings xviii. [27.]

\*[p. 226 MS.]

Thieves and robbers fast and watch more than these orders.

The fourth deceit is holiness of the company,

and force of united prayer.

Example from prayers to men.

Masses.

The convent of Christ's apostles was the best, but it contained Iscariot.

þiue rewele wiþoute god were presumption of a fend, & to make a rewele þus to crie on god were a signe of blasfeme folye; as who seyde bi þe prophetis word: "crye ȝee fast, for ȝoure god slepiþ, or ellis he is in som priuee place, or ellis ocupied wiþ oþere men." \*We graunten þat cryng profitiþ som tyme, but not to make þus rewele þer-of. hit is knowen to men of resoon þat many signes ben nakid to moue men þat prayeris of þise ordris ben betere þen oþer comune lyues; for fastyng comeþ ofte in robberis, boþe in watir & in lond, meche more þen ordris taken, but bidding of god fayliþ hem boþe; & wakyng at mydnyȝt falliþ to þeues þat robben men; & ȝif þise outlawis passen þis rewele, it is for þei robben men priueliche, & herfore þey feynen oþere causis wherby heere prayere is so good. ¶ þe fourþe cause in ordre is holynesse of here compaynye; & as many men drawn a ship or don an oþer dede of strengþe where fewere shulden not do þis dede, so it is in craft of prayng; many men when þey ben gederid preyen more plesingliche to god þen wen þei ben scaterid in twynny, or fewe to preye god herfore. & þis þei prouen bi mannes custom; when a peple wole preye a lord, þei gederen hem hool togidere, & preyen<sup>1</sup> mekeliche & wiþ knelyng. & þus men shapen for many massis to brynge a soule anon to heuene<sup>2</sup>; who wolde not procure sicke helperis to preye god & shende þe fend. But<sup>3</sup> here cristen men þenken þat þise wordis smacchen ofte falshede & blasfemye aȝen god, but

hou sulden þei conferme prayere? It is seyð ofte hou þat þe couent of cristis apostlis passede alle oþere couentis boþe in

<sup>1</sup> prayem MS.

<sup>2</sup> heuene MS.

<sup>3</sup> Bub MS.



patroun & in rewele, & ȝit oon of hem was scarioth; hou many scariothis ben in þise couentis? & felowship of siche pseudoes lettij *oþer* men to preye, for hou shulde þat man pray wel þat haþ enuye to his broþer & stondiþ in queer wij hym, *oþer* next hym or a syde? siþ siche daliaunce wole gregge his ire, & vnable hym to haue ouȝt of god. & þus þei faren ofte as don doggis in a poke; oon drawiþ forþ an-*oþer* aȝen; but hou shulde sich drawyng helpe to drawe þe ship of holy chirche bi fisshis þat ben þus deepe in watir? many of hem wolden drawe betere ȝif þei stooden hem self al one. & þis blasfeme lickenesse, \*þat comunen preyeþ þus to lordis, telliþ openliche þis heresye þat þise newe ordris hauen here; for god for his grettnesse is in ilche place of þis world, & redy to helpe men soonere in what place þat þei lyuen betere. & þus as freris lyues techen, it were good to many men þat ben closid in þise ordris þat þei disporteden hem in þe world. for siche auentyng many times fordoiþ enuye, ire & lust, & þise þre synnes ofte tymes letten þise men to preye deuoteliche; & þus it is open heresie too trowe þat þristyng of ordris in oon cloystre or in oon hous helpiþ þat god heeriþ hem betere, al ȝif þei liuen worse or ellis not betere to goddis pay. for al þing is present to god, & sich þristyng helpiþ not to hym, but ȝif it make men worse, for the syne of oon persone bi siche þristyng fouliþ more hise broþere. Lord, siþ disciplis of crist aftir þat he was went to heuene weren scaterid in mony cuntres, & weren not þrungen in siche couentis, what wit shulde moue þise ordris aftir to gedere hem þus aȝen skile? certis a fool may wel see þat þis resoun failiþ foulliche, & crist gederede tuelue apostlis, þerfore antecrist shal gedre moo; god reyneþ in þis ordre, þerfore antecrist shulde ȝette in wallis. god wole þat men quiken þis erþe, & ben spred aboute in vortu of god, & þis tauȝten cristis apostlis fro þat þei weren quikid of crist heere maistre; but þise ordris wolen euere be disciplis & neuere come to knowyng of treuþe. & þus þei moten neede be euer punyshid as disciplis of antecrist, but ȝif þei lernen som tyme

A man cannot pray well when he stands next to a brother whom he hates.

They are like dogs in a sack.

[p. 93 MS.]

God is everywhere, and helps men soonest where they live best. Many men would live better in the world than as friars.

In the cloister one man's sin injures others.

The apostles were scattered abroad.

[2 Tim. iii. 7.]

to go out of þise newe ordris, siþ þei letten cristis lawe to  
 rennue & double profyt of hooly chirche. ¶ Þe fifþe deceyt of  
 þise pseudoes stondiþ falsliche in þis feynyng, þat þei maken  
 a newe craft to preye & to loue god, & so þis newe craft is  
 betere þen al þe ordre þat crist haþ makyd; & þus þei hauen  
 special preyeris makid of newe bi þe pope þat ben betere þen  
 þe pater noster, for more pardoun falliþ to hem. þise wordis  
 may moue men þat wolen \*folyliche trowe to hem, but ion  
 biddiþ men to assaye spiritis, whereþe þei ben on goddis  
 syde. & þus men ben not wiþ god, þat holden wiþ man  
 more þen wiþ crist. Oure bileue techiþ us þat crist is boþe  
 god & man, & so he is al myzty, al witty, & al ful of good  
 wille. & þus noon pope ne oþer prelat haueþ witt ne power  
 but of crist, in as meche as he sewiþ crist bifore oþere of hise  
 felowis; & so it is a feyned power, a feyned wit, & feyned  
 good, al þat is not shewid in dede, in trewe sewyng of crist.  
 & þus what man þat euere seiþ þat he makiþ betere preyers  
 þen crist, & ordeyneþ þer-to more pardoun, blasfemeþ as  
 antecrist; & þus þe old maner was betere to preye & to  
 plesse god þen ony newe preyer mai be, hou euere antecrist  
 speke here. Shewe men bi goddis lawe or resoun þe good-  
 nesse of siche preyeris, & þat þei plesen so meche to god as  
 þei ben feyned of þis nouelrie; & ellis men shulden not trowe  
 to hem, but have hem suspect bi maner of lif. Wel I  
 wott þe fend may feyne sich goodnesse of hise preyeris  
 & heynesse of his power, for men mai not see it; & herfore  
 he mai pursewe men but þif þey graunten þis excellence, but  
 noon man shulde trowe þis but if God tawþte it as bileue.  
 And here is weye to antecrist, to pursewe cristen men for  
 þei holden hem in þe boundis þat crist haþ giuen to bileue.  
 Cristen men trowen þis, þat þif þise preyeris weren so goode,  
 crist wolde haue shewid hem bifore, when hise vikeris & his  
 people weren betere, & þus þei ben foolis þat trowen þis  
 goodnesse of þise newe preyeris; for þe pater noster is þe  
 best preyer þat ony pope or man kon ordeyne. for who  
 shulde autorise þat god shulde more be payed of ony preyer?

The fifth deceit is  
 that they pretend  
 special prayers,  
 more efficient  
 than the Lord's  
 Prayer.

\*[p. 335 MS.]

[1] John iv. [1.]

No pope nor pre-  
 late has know-  
 ledge or power,  
 but of Christ.  
 True knowledge,  
 etc., is shown in  
 following Christ.

Let men show the  
 goodness of these  
 prayers by God's  
 law or reason.

If these prayers  
 were so good,  
 Christ would  
 have taught them  
 sooner.

Paternoster the  
 best of prayers.

& it is al oon to seye þat a *preyere* is betere, & þat it plesijþ god more; but who mai do þis but god? for god oonliche mai giue grace & more accepte men to mede; & þus trowe we not in þise *preyeris*, siþ hem wantijþ ground. & þus ȝif <sup>[p. 94 MS.]</sup>

lif \*of þise newe ordris be more medeful þen mannes lif was woned, it mot neede be grauntid of god, for newe ordinaunce is but fantym here; & þus siþ good lif of men þat ben wandrynge in þis weye is betere *preyere* to god, ȝif it plese more to god. What lif þat plesijþ more to god is betere

Good life is the best prayer.

*preiere* to god; as lif of a trewe plow man or ellis of a trewe heerde is betere *preyere* to god þen *preyere* of any ordre þat god loueþ lesse, blabers þei neuere so meche wiþ lippis. as it is likeliche þat baptist preyede betere bi hym silf in desert þen ony persone of þise newe ordris, for hise lippis ben lesse work; & þus betere lif helpijþ more to soulis þen massis or þise newe *preyeris*. Þe sixte deceyte of ypocritis, þat bigyliþ men in þis matere, is þat þei liuen honestliche in chirche, in hous, & in gardyn, & in alle ornamentis þat fallen

The sixth deceit is that they live honourably in church, house, etc.

to worship of god; who shulde not loue sich a sect, boþe bi kynde & bi resoun? Here men þenken þat þe fend vsijþ hise ypocrisie, & contrarieliche to crist moueþ men bi sensible signes. it is good & resonable men to haue chirchis in mesure, & in numbre, & in weyhte, aftir þe hooly trinitee; but þenne it is nedeful þat þei be makyd bi iust dispensis, & to profit of þe lond in which þei ben makid inne, & not do wrong to old chirchis bi weye of heere newe fyndyng; & so alle housis & placis shulden be shapen bi lore of crist. But somme men þenken þat freris bilyng failijþ in alle þise þre

Churches are good,

but they should be built with regard to justice, and to profit of the people.

poyntis. It is comuneliche makid bi elyh robberyngis of þe fend, so þat it is al oon to see bilyngis of þise newe ordris, & to see a fendis holde, makid of robberye of pore men;

Friars' building falls in these points.

& so when men loken on heere castelis þei hauen matere to wepe, boþe þise ordris & seculeris, but specialliche þe pore peple. for ȝif we loken to cristis lif, he forsok sich bilyng, & lokyng on þe citee, þat he seyde was aȝen þe apostlis, he wepte þer upon for greet synne þat it hoordeda. & when

When men look on friars' castles they should weep, Luke xix. [41.] as Christ did over Jerusalem.

\*[p. 94b MS.]  
Matt. xxiv. [2.]

crist wente out of þe temple \* & sat in þe mount aȝen it, hise disciplis for wondryng þer-of & to see his wit þer-of askeden wheþer he sau alle þise wondirful byldyngis. & crist answered to hise apostlis, & tolde hem hou hym likede herof: "Soþeliche i seye to þou, tyme shal come soone heraftir þat noon stoon shal be left here on an-oþer, þat it ne shal be destroyed;" and so it fel soone aftir, when ierusalem was destroyed. þre þyngis shulden moue men to be glad of sich

Such houses turn  
away from the  
state of inno-  
cence.

byldyng: On, for it turneþ a-vey fro þe state of innocence; & herfore crist & baptist & oþere seyntis makeden noon siche.

Heb. xiii. [14.]

þe secunde cause þat shulde moue to be glad of siche byldyng is, þat god seyþ bi poul: "we hauen not here a duellynge citee, but we seken heuen to come." & non drede

They lead men to  
love this world.

siche housyng makij many to loue þis world, & to duelle in lustis þer-of, & leue loue of þe oþere worlde. þe þridde

They are built  
out of the spoils  
of the poor, and  
are but a heap of  
wrongs.

cause þat men shulden haue to loke on siche byldyng is þat þei shulden þenke on þe pore peple; hou ofte þat þei ben spoylid bi suttil fraudis of þe fend bifore þat siche housis weren bildid, þat ben but an heep of wrongis. þise þre causis shulden not ȝue matere of ioye to men of resoun, but rapere matere of sorowe to telle hasty destriyng of hem. men may

The founders of  
the orders or-  
dained no such  
buildings.

see ouer wheþer þise patrouns vseden þise housis in sich mesure, & leften in heere rewlis aftir þat heere disciplis shulden bilde þus; & siþ þe contrarie is soþ, to whiche þise ordris ben streytliche sworn, it semeþ þat þe fend shapiþ a disport to hise clerkis to serue hym inne. & so ȝif men chargen mesure, þise placis & bildyng of hem passen mesure þat god haþ tauȝt, & so þei ben agen goddis power. & ȝif we taken heede to þe noumbre of siche castel of þe fend, þey ben aȝen wisdom of crist, siþ he approuede not siche housis. for siþ in tyme of more wisdom þer weren chirchis & housis

\*[p. 95 MS.]

ynowe, what wisdom \*is it to multiplie þise, & destrye hoolyers old placis? certis iniuries ben don to parishe chirchis bi siche newe chirchis of ordris; & ȝif þus wrongis of a place shulden lette men to herye god þere, siche placis of newe ordris shulden be fled as fendis holetis. And ȝif we

These churches  
injure the parish  
churches.

weyn aryht dispensis bi lore of þe hooly goost, þer is neyþer stoon ne tree in alle sicke newe ordris placis þat it ne is groundid bi wrong, & temporid bi robbery of pore men. They are built by robbery. & þus sicke bilyngis makyn pride, & not comfort of goddis prissonneris, for þei ben not fed bi þis, but robbid of goodis þat þei shulden haue; & þis is not lore of þe hooly goost, but techyng of þe kyng of pride. & þus ornamentis þat þise Ornaments. freris ordris vsen ben toolis to bigyle þe peple, & to feede heere bodiliche eye, & robbe þe eye of heere soule, as somme of þise newe ordris hauen costly encenseris to encense beddis of men & of wymmen & to spoyle hem. Censers to incense beds. They absolve men long dead, who may be in hell, þus þei assoylen men þat weren longe deed byfore; & soulis of sicke men ben in helle as somme men supposen; & þise blynde men þat assoylen þus kunnen not teche þe contrarie of þis. & þus þey doon þis for monee, & not for deuocioun, but ȝif sicke blynde blasfemes be clepid deuocioun of freris. and do this for money. þus ornamentis of ypocritis harmen þe peple þat þei duellen wiþ, & al heere lif doiþ harm to men boþe to body & to soule. & þus fendis children bygilen men bi þing þat hem semeþ good, & maken hem trow þat it profitiþ, but ȝit it doiþ meche harm. & siþ alle lyues of sicke men ben ful of þe fendis deceytis, men sufficen not to telle heere gylis, but bi þis men may knowe somme. Their deceits are too many to tell. And here ben somme men moued to trowe þat crist spekiþ in his lawe of sich maner of ypocritis, to teche his peple to fle hem. for siþ crist is verree god,<sup>1</sup> & knowiþ \*clereliche al þing to come, alle þise deceytis ben present to hym; what shulde lette hym to telle hem? \*[P. 95b MS.] Certis charite of Crist shulde neede hym to warne men here. & þus resoun Christ warns us against these sects. Matt. xxiv. moneþ men to suppose þat crist telliþ of gilis of þe pope, & aftir of gilis of þise new sectis, for alle þise ben lemes of antecrist. whi shulde not crist telle here of hem? and þus þenken somme þat it were a medeful dede & good prayere to It were a good deed to withstand them. god to aȝenstonde þise new sectis, & clenese cristis ordinaunce fro sich errours þat ben brouȝt inne. Lordis, clerkis

<sup>1</sup> good MS.

& comunes shulden helpe here for mede of crist, & oldnesse of  
 þise errours shulde not moue to leue hem, siþ god is myȝty  
 ynou to helpe & destroye hem alle. þis entent hauen meke  
 men bi grace & bileue of crist, þat his ordinaunce was and is  
 best, and oþer contrarie ordinaunce is euel; & bileue techiþ  
 þat [he] mai not fayle to helpe men þat trauelen wel here.

Meek men think  
 that Christ's or-  
 dinance is best.

Examine þou wel þe grounde an þe resoun of newe men, þat  
 seyen þey holden þe lawe and þe ordinaunce of crist, & we  
 trauelen to destroye hem. for certis ȝif we erreden here in  
 wit or wille bi fals lore, we wolden mekeliche a-noon turne  
 to treuþe when it were tauȝt. Amen.

Examine the  
 reasons of those  
 who attack us.

If we err, we will  
 turn to truth  
 when taught.

Explicit tractatus de pseudo freris.

## XXIII.

## OF CONFESSION.

DR. SHIRLEY says that this tract is the same as the Latin *De Eucharistia et Pœnitentia*. The latter is found only at Vienna, and I have not been able to compare the two. I have, however, no doubt that this is genuine. Its presence in the Ashburnham MS. tells much in its favour, while the evidence of style seems to me to mark it as decidedly Wyclif's. His predestinarian doctrines are incidentally referred to on p. 329: "who is he þat lettijȝ god to saue men as he haþ ordeyned . . . before þe world was made?"

There are curious notices on pp. 333 and 335 of the prevalent fashion of keeping private confessors and of the influence which such men wielded.

The attack on transubstantiation at the end of the tract shows it to be late.

Copied from the Dublin MS. CC, and collated with the Ashburnham MS. MM.

## SUMMARY.

Two virtues are in man's soul: holiness and knowledge. Holiness is the more important. To holiness confession is needful. Definition of confession. Confession of sin is made to God or to man. The latter may be either open or private, but must be voluntary	p. 327
Private confession is unnecessary, unauthorized by Christ or by the practice of the early Church. It is a device to increase the power of the Pope	328
It is limiting God's power to say a man cannot be saved without shrift. Private confession gives occasion to sin	329
Possible abuses from the law of regular confession. The proper priest may be unfit. Confession hinders preaching	330
The methods of absolution vary. Some seem to claim fellowship with God for the priest. Arbitrary assignment of penance. Leads to buying sin for money	332
The devil wishes all men to believe that priests only have power to absolve, and the four orders of friars unite to maintain this. Evil of private confessors	334

It would be well to have two priests to hear penance, as it would prevent mischief and increase wholesome shame. Some confessions would be better divulged ....	p. 335
Confession has done much good and much harm. It should not be obligatory. None of the confessors are equal to the task they undertake. General and open confession sufficient .....	336
All sin is offence against God.....	337
Need of sorrow for sin. God's free grace a reason for avoiding sin .....	338
Antichrist argues that without the outward sign of shrift the sacrament of penance is destroyed .....	339
God's courtesy does not in all cases require audible confession, and all good deeds may be called sacraments .....	340
The keys given to St. Peter are knowledge and power, which were given also to the other apostles. The knowledge is knowledge of God's law, the power is that of preaching and teaching .....	341
Antichrist cites the ten lepers that Christ bid show themselves to the priest .....	342
It was Christ that healed them; and we should follow the Samaritan's example and thank Christ for forgiveness .....	343
Arguments of Antichrist from James v. 16; from the raising of Lazarus; and from John's baptism, shown not to bear on private confession to priests .....	343
Exhortation to priests to attend to preaching and to avoid claiming to perform miracles in the transubstantiation of the Host .....	345



*Nota de Confessione.*

\*Two virtues ben in mannes soule by whyche a man shuld be rewled; <sup>1</sup> hoolynesse in mannes wille, & good kunnyng in <sup>2</sup> his witt. hoolynesse shuld put out synne, & good <sup>3</sup> kunnyng shuld put out foly; but as wille haþ principalite to-fore witt of mannes soule, so hoolynesse is more worþe þenne is kunnyng of synful man. for wuckud aungels han myche kunnyng, but þei han nouȝt of hoolynesse. And ellis iche man were hoolier aftur þat he is more kunnyng; but poule seiþ þat mannes kunnyng bolniþ hym bi pride. but in oure lord ihesu crist was kunnyng & hoolynesse euen, for he was ful & heierst in kunnyng & heierst hooly, boþe god & man. and þus he seiþ in Iones gospel: "who of þou shal reprove me of synne," <sup>4</sup> as ȝif crist wolde seye to hem "y may not synne" seiþ I am god; and þus nouȝt may reprove me of synne." but crist seiþ next aftur þat sith he seiþ treuþe; whi <sup>5</sup> trowen þei <sup>6</sup> not to hym? In þise two wordis þat crist haþ seid, may we see hoolynesse & kunnyng. and hou hoolynes goþe before & kunnyng sueþ in worþinesse; for lyue a man hooly lyf, and kunnyng I-now wil folow aftur. To make hoolynesse in men is confession nedful; and þerfor shuld hooly churche witt sumwhat of confession. Confession generally is knowlechyng made wiþ wille; and sum confession is made wiþ-oute synne, and sum is knowlechyng of synne; & boþe þise two ben goode in man, but þe first is more worþe in crist. Mathew telliþ hou crist confessed to his fadur, <sup>7</sup> lord of þis world, & ȝitt crist myȝt not synne, and þis confessioun myȝt not be veyne. Confessioun þat man makij of synne is made of man in two maners. Summe is mad oonly to god truly by herte or mouþe. And sum confessioun is made to man, and þat may be on many maneres; ouþer opynly & generally, as men

[p. 127b MS.]

Holiness should rule a man's will; knowledge his wit.

Holiness of the more importance.

[1] Cor. viii. [1.]

John viii. [46.]

Confession needed to make men holy.

Mt. 23. [should be Matt. xi. 25.]

Confession may be to God; or to man,

<sup>1</sup> CC inserts in.<sup>4-6</sup> trowe ȝe CC.<sup>2</sup> þis MM.<sup>5-6</sup> omitted CC.<sup>3-5</sup> omitted CC.<sup>6</sup> or CC.

or private.

*confesseden in þe oolde lawe; Or priuely & rownyngly, as men confessen nowe-a-daies. whenne a man is constreyned by bodily<sup>1</sup> payne to telle his gilte, \*he confesseþ not; but<sup>2</sup> confession mut be wilful, or ellis it is not medeful to man.*

Cm 2<sup>m</sup> MM.

*It were to wite ouer in þis mater,\* wheþer priue confession made to prestis be nedeful to synful men, & wher þis confessioun is groundid. and it semeþ þat it is not nedful, but brouȝt*

Privy confession not needful.

*in late be þe fend; for crist alwitty vsed it not, ne noon of hise apostles aftur. And if it were nedful to man, crist wolde have vsed it or tauȝt it. Whenne crist forȝaue marie magde-*

Was not ordered by Christ.

*leyne hir synnes, he vsed not siche rownyng; and whenne he forȝaue petir hise synnes, & poule his, & oþer men heren þat he clensid, he vsid not sich rownyng in ere, ne siche asoylyng as prestis vsen now; and þus whenne crist clensid þe awoutrer, þat þe Iewes alegeden shulde be stoned, crist vsed*

John viii. [11.]

*not þis confession to hir, but bad hir go and wilne to synne no more. and siþ þat crist myȝt not faile in ordynauce to hise chirche, & he left þis confessioun, it semyth þat it is not nedeful; for if it were, þenne crist faylid in leuyng it; and also petre & alle oþer apostles, and also alle oþer popis faileden þat weren til Innocens cam, whenne þe fende was loused, and ȝitt men weren clensid of her synne picker & bettur þenne þei weren aftur, for I rede in þe boke þat luk wroto of apostles dedis, hou þre þousand turned in oon daye fro Iewes fables to cristis lawe, & noon of hem was þus confessid*

Acts ii. [41.]

Nor used in the early Church.

*to prestis. as þe story telliþ,\* petir bade hem generally haue sorowe & be baptized yehoon; but god telliþ not here of shrifte, but þat þei token þe hooly goost; and þus here synnes weren forȝyuen of god wiþ-outen siche confessioun as we now vsen. and þus it semþ to many men þat cristen men myȝten wele be saued wiþ-outen sich confessioun; as þei were be-fore pope Innocent, and þus it semeþ presumptioun of þis pope to make þis lawe; for hooly church shuld*

<sup>1</sup> omitted MM.

<sup>2</sup> for MM.

<sup>3</sup> omitted CC.

<sup>4</sup> CC inserts þe.

<sup>5</sup> shewiþ MM.

not þus be charged wiþ newe lawes, \* whenne oolde sufficeden; \* [p. 128<sup>b</sup> MS.]  
 and þus men seyne þat þe fend kest this for wynnyng &  
 hiþnes of preestis: and in token of þis defeaute makers of þis  
 lawe weren so marrid þat her lawe byndeþ noo persone but The law ordering  
it is invalid.  
 only suche þat ben boþe men & wymmen. þis semiþ a  
 feendis *presumpcion* to him þat knoweþ not kynd of lawe to  
 ordeyne lawe in sichē a maner,<sup>1</sup> of whiche noo sichē shulde be  
 made. and þus it semeþ to many men þat *antecrist* haþ A device of Anti-  
christ.  
 cast þis cast to make alle men soget to the pope; & lede  
 hem aftur þat hym likiþ. lord, where is fredom of crist  
 whenne men ben costen<sup>2</sup> in sichē bondage? Crist made hise  
 seruantes free, but *antecrist* haþ made hem bonde aþeyne.  
 And certis þer is noo autorite þat gaue him leue to make  
 men þus þrallis.

þitt it were to wite þe reson of goddis lawe whi men <sup>Cm 3<sup>m</sup> MM.</sup>  
 shulden hoolde hem in here bondes, & not make lawe fro  
 cristis ordre. It is oft seid in goddis lawe þat men shulden <sup>Deut. iv. [2.]</sup>  
 not adde þerto ne take þerfro, lest þei failen, siþ it is made  
 at poynt deuyse; and þus it semeþ a feendis *presumpcioun*,  
 þat hiþeþ himsilf a-bouen god, to make þus a newe lawe wiþ-  
 outen leue of þe furst treuþe. Also þis lawe of *confessioun* The law is against  
reason.  
 þat iche man mut nedis shryuen oony in þe þer priuely to  
 his propur prest, it semeþ opun aþens reson. for a man may be  
 baptized in tyme þat he<sup>3</sup> haþ discrecioun, &<sup>4</sup> anon aftur be ded  
 wiþ-outen doynge of dedly<sup>5</sup> synne. lord, whi shuld þis man be  
 dampned al if he shriue him not þus \*in þe þeer\*? Ion baptist  
 shroof hym neuer þus, ne any apostle of crist; and þitt bileue  
 nediþ vs to graunte þat þei ben seyntes in heuen. and þus  
 it may fallen of many martyres, & of men þat han no propur  
 prest. who is he þat lettiþ god to saue men as he haþ  
 ordeyned before þe pope & his lawe camen inne, & before þe  
 world was made? Also god gyueþ frely his grace, not-wiþ-  
 stondynge mannes lawe. whi may not \*god do grace to hise \* [p. 129 MS.]

<sup>1</sup> mater MM.<sup>4</sup> omitted CC.<sup>2</sup> castun MM.<sup>5</sup> dely CC.<sup>3</sup> omitted CC.<sup>6</sup> omitted CC.

treue seruauntes þat seruen him wele, al if þer were noo siche prest nor pope? as sumtyme was non. hou-euer antecrist glauer, he letteþ not god to do his wille; for he may disseyue<sup>1</sup> foolis, but not god, hou-euer he speke. also beleue techiþ men þat if a man be contrite, god þenne forȝyueþ him his synne; but who may lette god fro þis? David spekeþ

[Psalms xxxii. 15.] to god þus: "I seide, i shulde shryue my synnes aȝens me to þee, lord; & þou forȝauest me my synnes." lord, wher god be not as merciful as he was in þe olde<sup>2</sup> lawe? No þing shuld lett þer-to, but þat he becam man for mercy; & þus it seemeþ a blasfeme heresie to seie þat man<sup>3</sup> may not ellis come to heuen, but if he fulfille þis roten lawe þat was þus late made of antecrist. Also god may not ȝyue occasioun to two persones for to synne, for þenne he were auctor of synne &

Privy confession  
gives occasion to  
sin.

contrarie to himsilf; but bi þis priueye shrift a frere & nunne may synne to-gidre; and close hemsilf in a chaumbre bi lok in-sted of feyned assoylunge; for I suppose as knowen þing, þat whenne a lawe is feyned wiþouten god, & of þis lawe comeþ myche synne, þis lawe ȝyueþ occasion to al þat synne;

[Job xxxi. 1.]

"but þis lawe ȝyueþ occasioun to do so as it falliþ ofte." lord, wheþir god, þat seiþ bi Iob þat a man shuld make couenaunt wiþ hise wittis to þenke not on<sup>4</sup> a virgyne, ordeyned sich a lawe to men, þat prestis & wymmen shulde turne her faces to-gider, & speke of lustful<sup>5</sup> poutes & dedis, which myȝt do harme to hem boþe; but þis lawe ȝyueþ occasioun to do synne as it falliþ oft. Also þus may lordes & laidis be nedid to trowe sich men, & lettid to holde goddis lawe, and to stonde for riȝt on cristis syde. lord, if iche lord of ynglond & his wiif haden two schariotis to lede hem & her meyne and her werkis to þo puple, hou liztly myȝt antecrist conqwere þe churche and distruyȝe cristis rewme?

Cm 4<sup>m</sup> MM.  
\*[p. 129<sup>b</sup> MS.]

\* And ȝit men maken moo resons to meue þe chirohe to knowe þe treuþe & fredam of goddis lawe, so þat þe churche

<sup>1</sup> distroye CC.  
<sup>4</sup> omitted CC.

<sup>2</sup> wolde CC.  
<sup>5</sup> wiþ CC.

<sup>3</sup> he CC.  
<sup>6</sup> synful CC.

be not made bonde bi noo disceitis of *antecrist*, but stonde in þe same fredam þat crist haþ ȝouen. God ȝyueþ non occasion to *antecrist* for to synne; but bi þis feyned assoylyng he haþ occasion to synne in þe churche, and þus þis power is not of crist, wherby þis assoylyng is feyned; and þus þe fend mut nedis gabb whenne his *prestis* assoilen þus. for þus þe pope myȝt kepe to hym to name whom eu<sup>er</sup> he wolde *propur* *prestis*, and make couenaunt wiþ þis prest þat he assoyleþ no man but if he ȝyue so myche mone; or ellis beheȝt to holde on his syde, and þus *antecrist* myȝt soone *conqwere* lordshipes & eke rewmes to hym. and þus curatis & parishe prestis myȝten spuyle þe puple as freres done; and þus it were a benyfice to purchace of þe pope to be a *propur* *preste* þus. and it falleþ oft þat sich *propur* *prestus* ben vn-able to here shrifitis; and þe maker of þis lawe may not make alle siche propre *prestis* able, and so he *constreyneth* men in cas to shryue hem to an vnable prest. but who shuld preise þis lawe *þerfore*? siþ yuel frute witnessiþ yuel rote. As<sup>1</sup> if a pope make a lawe þat who eu<sup>er</sup> he lymtiþ to here *confessioun* of þis man or *confession* of þis comu[n]ate, he shal here þise *mennes* shrift, & he<sup>2</sup> is founden vnable aftur, þenne þis popis lawe wiþ treuþe in-dede may liȝtly ȝyue occasioun of syne. and if þou seist þat siche bullis of þe pope vnderstonden eu<sup>er</sup> a *condicioun*; þat if þis persone bi goddis lawe shal profit in<sup>3</sup> fulfillyng of þise popes bulles, þenne þe popes bullis shulen haue strengþe, & elles þei shulen not stonde in stede: Certis if þise popis bulles shulen be vnderstonden wiþ sich a label, þen-ne þei weren not profitable to þe purchasour ne to þe churche; \* for who<sup>4</sup> shuld take ony benyfiss of þe \* [p. 130 MS.] puple<sup>4</sup> wiþ sich bullis, if his ablete shulde be proued in werk be-fore he were acceptid? soþe it is þe more able man to god shuld qwenche þis ablete of þis man; and þis skil moued hooly men to stryue not for suche ablete. but crist ȝaf reule

Possible abuses of confession.

The priest may be unfit,

or may become unable.

Pope's bulls licensing confessors are useless if not harmful.

<sup>1</sup> al CC.<sup>2</sup> omitted CC.<sup>3</sup> into CC.<sup>4</sup> who shuld not take ony benyfice of þe pope CC.

This confession  
hinders preach-  
ing.

If this law is  
profitable,

Christ is to blame  
for not having  
instituted it.

Cm 5m MM.

The words of  
absolution vary.

\*[p. 1306 MS.]

The different  
forms.

The Greeks' is  
the least evil,  
being only a  
prayer.

to þe Iewes to iuge hym able bi hise werkis, but wele men  
witen þat neþer popis bullis ne *trauaile* for hem by coueitise  
makip þis man but more vnable<sup>1</sup> to gete ouȝt by suche  
bullis. Also þis lawe is full suspecte, for it letteþ bettur  
occupying, & askeþ werse occupyinge, þat is not grounded in  
goddis lawe. þat *prelate* þat shrieuþ shuld *preche* þe puple,  
and he þat is shriuē shuld here goddis worde; but bi þis  
shriften ben boþe þise lettid. and noo drede þei weren  
bette, siþ crist vsed hem & not þis shrift, & bad hem be  
vsed, & not þis. So it semeþ þat *antecrist* bi þis puttiþ cristis  
ordynauce abake; and we taken here as opynly knowen,  
þat whenne eny harm comeþ of a lawe, & þat lawe is not  
groundid in skyl, it ȝyueþ occasion of þis harme; for reson  
excuseþ not þis lawe, þat ne it makeþ blamefule þis harme.  
and if it were reson in þis popis tyme to make þis lawe to þe  
churchis profite, it were as myche resoun þat þis lawe had  
ben vsed bi-forē þis popis tyme; but þenne weren crist & petre  
& oþer popes to blame þat leften it þus. lord, what meued  
þis late popes to make furst þis lawe, whenne þe fend was  
vnbounden, and god meued not crist ne hise vikars to sue it,  
whenne it semed as myche skil. wher þis pope was god of  
heuen, so þat men<sup>2</sup> may not know his<sup>3</sup> reson.

But ȝitt þer comeþ more harme of þis lawe of *confessioun*,  
ffor *confessours* varien in wordis of assoylyng, as þei done in  
wordis of her *cursyng*, & gabben *commynly* wiþ blasfeme  
wordis aȝens beleue; and it is lichly to many men siþ  
þe pope kan not teche þise wordis þat prestis shulden seie  
\*bi goddis lawe, he can not grounde þis lawe in reson.  
Summe prestis seyne symply "I assoyle þe of þi synnes;"  
& leyne her hondes on her hedes, or ellis touchen hem wiþ  
a ȝerde. Summe prestis seyne a more raunge; þei preyen  
furst þat god assoyle hym, & afftur þei assoylen hym bi  
autorite ȝouen to hem.<sup>4</sup> þe þridde maner & leste yuel, þat  
men seyn þat greks han, is þat þe prest preyep þat god

<sup>1</sup> vnableþ hym CC.

<sup>2</sup> god CC.

<sup>3</sup> þis CC.

<sup>4</sup> hym CC.

assoyle hym & leuyng worde of assoylyng; and þus he myȝt assoyle at home hym þat were a þousand myle fro hym. and lewed men þat weren bettur myȝten þus assoyle bettur þenne wickid prestis. ffor it is lichly þat a prest ordeyned to be dampned assoyleþ not þus; but what prest or man confessid wot wher þis prest shal be dampned. and þis shrift þus brouȝt inne semeþ to marre þe churche in bileene, as þe prest made hym goddis felow, as god and he shulden assoile together; or ellis þat god mut nedis assoile whenne þe prest makith his sygne. Suche many blasfemys aȝeynes þe beleue ben sowen of antecrist in þis mater, ffor god, þat ȝyueþ grace & is in þe soule, assoyleth & doþ a-vey synne, and þis may not þe prest do, siþ it is propur to god, and, siþ no man shuld liȝe a lytle lesyng to saue þe worlde, a prest shuld not seye, "ȝ assoyle," whenne he not neuer wheþir god assoyle. ffor he knoweþ neiþer wher þis man confessid seye treuþe vpon consyence, or wher þat he be contrite, as he knoweþ not hym-self; and I suppose he wite þe soþe, ȝitte he knowiþ not þe quantite of payne þat god wole þat þis man haue for hise trespass aȝeynes god, for penaunce is arbitrarie, now more & nowe lesse, aftur þat þe prest wole lymyte, be he neuer so grete a fool. And here spryngen many errours aȝens beleue on boþe sydis; for þe prest gedreþ hym ofte<sup>1</sup> moneye or money worþe by suche penaunce, and so bi priuey symony he harmeþ hem boþe & þe churche. and þus a frere or a prest haþ as<sup>2</sup> leue to be seuerly a confessour of a lord or of a \*lady as<sup>3</sup> to be<sup>3</sup> a simple bischop; for bi þis office he takiþ his worship & his wynnyng, as if he were pope. and it were hard to telle þe harme þat comeþ be many of þise confessours, for þe pope & þe emperour myȝte priuely be poysened bi suche fadres, and rewmes myȝten listly be destruyed by counseilis þat þei ȝyuen to lordis, for no drede þei ben cause of mennes synne confessid to hem. anentis þe persone þat is confessid fallen many errours aȝens bileue, as þat he þat is

Good laymen might absolve thus better than wicked priests.

The priest makes himself God's fellow.

It belongs to God to give absolution.

Amount of penance arbitrary.

\*[p. 181 MS.] A lord's confessor is as well off as a bishop.

Dangers from these private confessors.

<sup>1</sup> of CC.

<sup>2</sup> CC inserts myche.

<sup>3,3</sup> omitted CC.

confessid trowe as bileeue þat al his synne is forȝyuen be-for god, as þe confessour telleþ hym. and ȝitt it may falle þat boþe þise shulen ben dampned for her foly; for ofte þe confessid is not contrite & turneþ aȝeyne to his synne; and sicke tretim<sup>1</sup> ȝyneþ occasion þat þei boþe ben disceyend; and þe man þat is confessed weneþ þat god doiþ him wrong if he haue euor more peyne for his synne þenne þe prest enioyneþ. and þus synne myȝt be bouȝt for money, as who byȝe an ox or a kowe; and so riche men haden occasion to drede not for to synne, whenne þei myȝten for a lytle moneye be þus assoyled of alle her synnes; and pore men myȝten dispeire, for þei haden not to byȝe þus synne. Such many errours fallen & fewe men speken aȝeynes hem.

Sin might be bought as you would an ox or a cow.

Cm 6m MM.

But ȝitt þe feend feyneþ here a lesynge to excuse prestis hise seruauantis; he seiþ þat alle men shulden beleue þat what man þat his prest assoyleþ, what ever penaunce he enioyneþ, he is assoiled be-for god; and þus popes & prelates kepen to hem self assoylyng, in which lyþe wyynyng; and þus who-euor aȝeyne seye þis is pursued as an heretike, & þus by hise olde<sup>2</sup> wiles he knyttip to-gidre men to helpe popis & cardinales, bischopes & freres to crie þis as bileeue; & freris mouen lordis & ladies to defend þis lawe by strengþe, and bi þis gile þei leden lordis as a man lediþ a prisoner; & cristis secte is made pore, & þise fourē ben enhaunsed hiȝe; so þat, but if crist helpe his secte, þe fourē new wolen brynge \*it a-down; and þei fourē ben knyttid to-gidre in þis confessioun þat her maister haþ tauȝt, as if oon seid to anopur, "helpe me here, & I shul helpe þee." a þus a frere þat is a confessour to kyng or to a duke is ympe or pere to a bishop, by þe feynynge of þis confessioun, for þei seien he lediþ his soule eeuen to heuen by goddis lawe. and qwenes, duchesses, and oþer ladies han confessours of grete name, for as þise ladies ben felowes to lordis, so her confessours ben felowis to oþur. and þus þise lordis þat shulden be free, ben oft made þral bi ygnoraunce

The devil tries to keep absolution in the hands of popes and prelates.

The friars hold together,

\*[p. 131b MS.]

to keep up this confession that the devil has taught.

Ladies, too, have confessors of great name.

<sup>1</sup> trettes MM.

<sup>2</sup> omitted CC.



'of suche *confessours*<sup>1</sup>; for assoylinge of suche *confessours* haþ lytel *vertu* or non; but assoyling of god aftur þat a mannes liif is worþi fordoþe synne, & punyseþ it til þat it be fully for-  
 ȝyuen. it is seide *communly*, þat coupabilnesse of synne is for-ȝyuen, and ȝit þat synne dwelliþ to be punyshid, but not for to be dampned in helle. & al þis þing is priuey to god, boþe<sup>2</sup> to know it & to do it; as an erþly lord ȝyueþ not to his seruaunt power to forȝyue his trespasse, but þat he doiþ in his owne wille, & makeþ his seruaunt to telle it. miche more god of heuen forȝyueþ synne, when he knoweþ man þat he is worþi for sorowe of herte & for treue seruyce þat he doiþ aftur. and þus it is a blasfemy þat *confessours* seyn in þis mater, þat þei forȝyuen synne don aȝens god, & treten peyne aftur her lykyng. Al þis is *propur* to god, but whi shulde he make hem here his felowis? and it shal be shewed aftur, þat þis beleue may not be grounded; but þe feende is about to turne falsehed in-to treuþe, and turne hope in-to bileue, & dedis of hate in-to charite; & þus fredam, þat crist gaf to hise children, he wole turne falsely in-to þraldam. for now it is a lordly þing to have sich a proper *confessour*, and god wot, but þe lord wot not, wher he be a feend of helle; and algatis if he feyne hym power to assoyle more þenne he haþ; for by \*sich ypocrisie may he drawe hem boþe \*<sup>[p. 132 MS.]</sup> to helle, and do harme to þe church þus more þenne he doþe on þe toþur syde.

It is commonly said that in absolution the guilt is forgiven, but the sin must be punished.

All this is in God's hands, who does not make them his fellows.

It is the fashion to have a private confessor.

And ȝitt it semip þat suche *prestis* þat heren *confessiouns* oblischen hem folily to here þus confessions; and so non were discrete preest þus shryuyng, as þe popes lawe biddiþ. and ȝitt þe pope biddiþ in his lawe þat *confessours* be discrete, & þei here aloon mennes synnes; but it semeþ vndiscretly spoken, for it were better ioyne two *prestis* to be witness of mannes shrifte. for two witnessis ben bettre þenne oon, & more acordyng to goddis lawe; for boþe in þe oolde lawe, & in þe newe, men tolden *commynly* her synne; as þat þeeþ

Cm 7m MM. Priests that bind themselves to hear confessions are foolish,

but confessors should be discreet.

It would be better for priests to hear confessions in couples.

The old way was to confess publicly.

<sup>1</sup> omitted MM.

<sup>2</sup> but CC.

tolde in þe crosse to crist hise fordone synne; he shroue hym more medefully, þenne don <sup>1</sup>men now <sup>1</sup>rownyng with prestis, for crist telliþ in þe gospel þat he behyȝt hym þat he shulde be wiþ hym in paradise þat same daye; & sich absolucion ȝaue no pope aftur þis lawe. & if þou seist þat no man wolde shriue hym at oonys to many prestis, & so shulde mannes synne be hidde, & many dampned þat now ben saued. Certis siþen

The shame of confession, which is part of penance, would be greater.

þei shulde haue shame to telle her synnes þus to oo prest, & þis shame is þe moost part of penaunce, and makeþ penaunce more <sup>2</sup>medeful, <sup>3</sup>It semeþ it were more medeful <sup>4</sup>to shriue togidre to twey prestis. þou oft ȝaue men glorie to god shriuyng to mo men þenne to two; as whenne tweyn prestis seien nyȝe masse, many shryuen hem to boþe to-gidre. And but ȝif þis shrift were medeful, þe churche vsed it wiþ-outen cause. and þus as men hiden here synnes to shriue hem to-gidre to many prestis, so many men hiden here synnes to shriue hem to oo preest alone. And siþen prestis han not þe craft to enioyne a iust penaunce, it semeþ þat þei ben foolis to take so grete a charge vpon hem; and if a man þat slouȝ a lord shulde be hanged for <sup>5</sup>his deþe, <sup>6</sup>more shulde þat leche þat slouȝ a mannes soule be hanged of god for his foly. see we

Priests do not know how to enjoin penance justly.

\*[p. 132b MS.]

They give lighter penance than of old.

what penaunce was <sup>\*</sup>sumtyme enioyned to men þat synneden greuoualy, and see we penaunce nowe enioyned; & þise two a-corde ful litil, and as lawers moten graunt þat þis penaunce writen was goode; so þei moten graunt þat synners lyuen as longe as summe of hem diden, and it were as myche nede to leye now as myche penaunce to summe, as was þenne nede to many of hem; and þus noo prest þat lyueþ nowe haþ þis craft to leye euen þis penaunce. what wisdom were þenne to make þis lawe, or prestis to take þis craft on hem? and specially siþ prestis ben bounden on grete peyne to hele þis synne; and hit myȝt fellen in many caise þat it were boþe almes & nede to shewe mannes synne þat ben shriuen, but

It might be good to reveal some confessions.

<sup>1-1</sup> omitted CC.

<sup>2</sup> omitted MM.

<sup>3</sup> nedeful CC.

<sup>4</sup> nedeful CC.

<sup>5</sup> þis dede MM.

whi shulden prestis ben punyshed herfore? Men han<sup>1</sup> writen in latyn many resouns ageyne þis shrift.

Men dreden here to seie þe treuþe, but summen þenken þat <sup>Cm 8m MM.</sup> it standes in þis; þat confession made to god, wiþ worþi penauce ioyned þerwiþ, is better þan þis<sup>2</sup> confessioun made to any preest or pope. but I wot þat þise newe confessiouns han don myche good in þe church, & þerwiþ myche harme; and god woot wheþer was more of hem. and it is certeyne þat þis newe shrifte be-gan by ordynauce of þe pope, for no man can telle ellis hou & whenne þis shrifte beganne, and þis witnessiþ her propur doctour of þe popes lawe opynly; and so it semeþ to many men þat þis lawe shuld not be holden as goddis lawe ne euer more, but in þat tyme whenne reson of god shulde moue mennes consciens þat þis confessioun wold don hem good. and if any man aske more, he axiþ more þenne god wole axe, for god ordeyneþ neuer a lawe ne men to perfourme it but if þis lawe were grounded in resoun, and men shulden perfourme it wiþ wille; for ellis it were noo meede<sup>3</sup> to do it, but if it were wilful sumtyme; and þus þis \*lawers han nede to grounde þis lawe vpon reson, & to teche wheche ben able prestis to here þus mennes confessioun; for ellis shuld no man bi resoun telle þus his schrift to any prest. and þus men of conscience wolen not telle here þus her synne to prestis; for þei seyne þat no prest is able, but oonly crist, to here þus shriftes; and if eny diffame hem or pursue hem by þis lawe, þei baden shewe hem an able prest to here þus synnes of hem, and þei wolen blepely shryue hem þus, and ellis not, as þis lawe techiþ. but what prest þat it be, þat is synful & couetouse, & proferiþ him þus to here mennes schrifte, shewiþ himself vnable þerby? for if he had not couetise of worldly goodis & subiectioun of folk, he shuld preche to þe puple, & leue al siche rownyng þat is ungroundid; for sich preching by cristis lawe made many men to leue her synne, but I rede not in goddis lawe þat þis rownyng made euer man iust; and if it dide, it was because,

Confession has done much good and much harm.

It should not be obligatory.

[p. 134 MS.]  
Lawyers should show ground in reason for the law.

Men of conscience say that no priest, but only Christ, is able to hear confessions thus.

If priests did not covet wealth and authority, they would rather preach.

<sup>1</sup> MM inserts seen.

<sup>2</sup> any CC.

<sup>3</sup> nede CC.

Ask the Pope what is deadly sin; what are the proofs of contrition; what is the rule for enjoining penance! He and all his clerks cannot tell you. General confession is enough.

as a wronge may sumtyme make riȝt; and algatis synful men þat han prestis suspect of couetyse & of vnkusnyng in þis craft shuld kepe þis shrift fro sech prestis. but begynne we at þe pope, & aske him of dedly synne, & hou men shulden know *contricion*, & whi sicke penaunce shal be enioyned; and it semeþ to many men þat alle þe popes & þere clerkis kunnen not telle on of þise þre; and þerfore þei wolen shryue hem to god. *general* schrifte & opyn to man wole þei make, & þat is I-now, so þat it come of *contricion* & treue penaunce þat men speken of.

Cm 9m MM.

For it were not to ȝyue occasion to horde synne & to holde it, þerfor men shulden by goddis lawe moue men to forsake

Antichrist has stopped preaching.

synne, and þus shulden prestis do be *prechyng*; but *antecrist* haþ suspendid hit now. man shuld haue sorowe of his synne, for gretnesse of þe kynd lord, & harm of leeing of his *grace*, & for obliшыng to grete payne. No man synneþ as we

\*[p. 134b MS.]

speken here but if he synne \*aȝen god, for who euer synneþ not aȝens hym, be his trespas neuer so myche punyshed here, he may not be dampned in helle þerfore, and ellis it were no

All sin is against God.

synne of man. & þus men punyshen ofte men here in

Men are often punished for deeds that do not offend God.

mennes courte ful greuously for dedis þat men callen trespasses, & ȝitt god is not wroþe for<sup>1</sup> hem; but it may falle oft

Sins against God are not punished, or only because they offend men.

þat men erren, & punyshen not þe trespasses of god, ne for þat it is don aȝens god, but for mennes wynnyng; or for þat it misse-likiþ hem. and þenke we hou a man wole meke

We should humble ourselves for our sins.

him to a worldly lord for trespasses don to hym; & bi oure feiþ god is more lord wiþouten mesure þenne any erþly kyng; herfore we shulden be meke to god for trespasses þat we han

God's greatness and kindness should both move us to sorrow.

don to hym, and specially for his kyndenesse þat he made vs first of nouȝt, & siþen bouȝt vs fro þe fendes prisoun, & giueþ vs aye grace in alle oure goodis; and he is redy to ȝyue vs blisse, if we seruen him *perfitly*. and þus boþe þe gretnesse of þis lord & his kyndenesse shuld mene us to sorow for oure synnes. a man haþ a myche forþinkyng for leesyng of loue

& of an erþely lorde; what witt or treuþe is in þat man

<sup>1</sup> wiþ CC.

þat soroweþ not for losse of goddis grace? we han sorowe for losse of two goodis, of worldly goodis, & goodis of kynde; and ȝitt we sorowen to lytil for lesyng of goodis of grace; & ȝitt þei ben þe moost goodis of þise þre goodis þat a man haþe. and siþen beleue techiþ vs þat men þat breken goddis hestis, & maken not a-seeþe þerfore, moten nedis be dampned in helle, Drede of þis grete peyny shuld moue men to sorowe for synne.

& þus ambrose & gregory seyne þat þenne a man haþ fully sorowe, whenne hym displeiþ fordon synne, & not eft wil synne ageyne; an þus is þat man contrite of synne, þat he vngodeli to god haþ don, þat he haþ þerfit wille to leue it, and for no þing wil synne ageyne. þise men þat han \*a litil displeyng & ben ful nyȝ to synne ageyne han no penaunce of her synne, be þei neuȝ so oft I-shriuen; and þus þe shrift þat is þus made makeþ men hardy to synne ageyne, for contricioun mut be groundid in sad loue of ihesu crist, so þat contricioun seye sad sorowe for synne þat is don, and sadde loue to synne not ageyne, as myche or more as was likyng to synne. and þis kunne not we knowe ful certeyne, but han glymeryng & supposyng, & þus we moten lyue here in beleue & in hope to crist, þat riȝt entent & goode werkis grounde vs in hope, þat crist wole saue vs. and he þat trustiþ to popis bulles or assaylinge fro peyne & synne, or oþur wordis of confessours, þat þei feynen<sup>1</sup> bisyde goddis lawe, is folily discoeyued in hise bileue & in hope, & þus he dispeyreþ; but we shulden beleue þat grace of god is so gret & plentyuouse, þat if a man synne neuȝ so miche ne so longe in his lyue, if he wole aske of god mercye & be contrite for his synne, god wole forȝyue him his synne wiþouten sicke iapes feyned of prestis. but be men war of þis perile, þat continuance of mannes synne wiþouten sorowe & displeaunce wole make his synne harde, & bereue him power to sorowe þerfore, & to gete mercy, and þus men shulden euȝ drede synne, & flee to knytt-on to a-noþer; for whenne a man synkis in þe myre, at þe laste he may not helpe hym self.

Ambrose and Gregory.  
What true repentance is.

[p. 135 MS.]  
Without sorrow for sin shrift is useless.

We cannot know that we are truly contrite, but must hope so.

No trust to be placed in the Pope's bulls,

but in the greatness of God's grace.

Use hardens sin.

<sup>1</sup> synen CC.

Cm 10<sup>m</sup> MM.

Antichrist urges  
that heretics will  
destroy the sacra-  
ments.

Psalm lxxi. 22.

The sacrament of  
confession like a  
harp.

\*[p. 135<sup>b</sup> MS.]

Such figurative  
interpretations  
good when well  
taken,  
but this is not to  
the point.

The courtesy of  
God does not ask  
all men to make  
audible confes-  
sion.

A man may re-  
pent silently as he  
may sin silently.

It wens to witt to assoyle skils þat antecrist makij aȝens  
his waye. ffurst he seiþ þat heretikes wolun destruyȝe þe  
seuen sacramentis; for þat stondiþ in *confessioun* of mouþ,  
& sorow of hert, & a-seet making, and herfor seiþ david in  
his boke: "þou god þat art my god, I shal synge to þe in  
an harpe." an harpe haþe þre partis of hym; þe ouermost  
is which ben stringis wrastid, þe secounde is þe holow part  
of þe harpe, þe þridde knytteþ þise two to-gidre. Riȝt so in<sup>1</sup> þis  
sacrament mut be *contricioun* for þe furst part, & aftur a  
man mut \*synge to god in voice for þe secound part, and þe  
þridde tyme he must make a-seeþ & knytt þise two partes  
to-gidre. what herityke or fool is he þat wold destruyȝe þis  
gostly harpe? here men seyen þat trewe entent shuld be to  
declare riȝt beleue, hou men shulden harpe here to god, as  
david did & oþer seyntis; for many kunne not<sup>2</sup> wrast þis harpe,  
& oþur kunne not harpe whenne it is diȝt. Suche wittis  
gyuen to goddis worde ben goode whenne þei ben wele  
taken; and þis witt þat here is seid telliþ þat a man shulde  
shriue hym to god, & makiþ no myȝde of rownynge shrift,  
þat is late brouȝt inne bi þe pope. and iche man þat holdiþ  
beleuee granteþ þat a man shuld shriue him to god, ȝe, & to  
man, bi voice of mouþe, and haue sorow for his synne,  
& þerfor make to god a-seeþ for synne; but þis is<sup>3</sup> don apertly  
to prestis, when þei ben good & louen more þe heele of  
mennes soules þenne her goodis by coueytise. but here men  
shulden vnderstonde þat þe curtesie of god askiþ not of iche  
man to shriue him þus by voice of mouþe; for as many  
synnen greuously wiþ-inne in herte, as did þe fend, so many  
men maken aseþ bi sorow of herte, þat may not speke or  
wanteþ oportunittee to shryue hym to man bi voice; and riȝt  
so as a man may synne, so he may here make aseþe; for  
god is as redy to ȝyue mēcy as he is redy to take veniaunce.  
triste wele to god & holde his lawe, & þenne þou shriuest þe  
wele to him; & synge to him wiþ ten stringis, þat ben  
kepinge of þe ten hestis; and sorowe of trespasse aȝens hem

<sup>1</sup> omitted CC.<sup>2</sup> omitted CC.<sup>3</sup> omitted CC.

ten shal wraste þis harpe to a-corde welle. and many men failen in þis wrastyng & in goostly syngyng aftur; and so þis priuey sorowe of herte is no sacrament of þe church, ne priuey rownyng late brouȝt inne, for sacramentis ben open & knowen. but whesne a man wiȝ contrite herte shrieuȝ him opynly to god or man, þenne his voice, þat is token of his hooly sorowe of herte, may be cal<sup>d</sup> a sacrament, as men knowen þat disciuen it. & þus we largen in sacramentis, for iche good sensible dede þat we don, or þat springiȝ of mannes charite, may be callid a sacrament; and þus þre reisyngis of dede bodies þat crist dide, as þe gospel telliȝ, may be called þre sacramentis, for þre turnyngis of man to god. Summe men turnen to god wiȝ-inne, & summe aftur þat þei han synned wiȝ-outward, and summe fro<sup>1</sup> þat þei han<sup>1</sup> synned in custom; and þus þe rysyng of þe<sup>2</sup> lasar was a grete sacrament, as men reden in þe church. and antecrist may bigyle foolis bi sich lewde resouns as he makȝ, but goddis lawe telliȝ wele þe falshed of suche resouns.

Secret confession is no sacrament;

sacraments are open and known.

[p. 136 MS.]

In another sense all good deeds ar sacraments.

And jitt gruccheȝ antecrist, and seiȝ þat crist telliȝ in þe C<sup>m</sup> 11<sup>m</sup> MM. gospel how crist specified to petre to ȝyue hym þe keyes of heuen; and so petre mut haue a viker þat shuld specialy bere þe keyes, and þise keyes shulden opyn & bynde to for-ȝyue synnes, and opyn men heuen, & to curse oȝur men þat don aȝen goddis lawe.

Keys of heaven given to Peter, and so to his vicar.

Here we seyne be goddis techyng þat mich errour is in þis poynt. Summe ben so nyȝ beestis, þat þei vnderston den bodily keyes, by whiche heuen ȝates shulden be openid and stokune,<sup>3</sup> & petur is porter in þis office. þe secounde errour in þis poynt is more perelouse in þe church, for pharisees alargen her browes & gogelen fer<sup>4</sup> fro goddis lawe; þei seyn þat þise keyes ben goostly wittis & power, ȝyuen to hem to bynde & assoile men aftur þe witt appropriid to hem; and herby<sup>5</sup> þe fend feyneȝ oft bi his viker antecrist many errours in þe church, & doȝe myche harme to foolis.

Some men fools enough to faneȝ material keyes and Peter a porter.

Pharisees say the keys are a spiritual power to bind and loose.

The pride weye of bileue seiȝ þat þer ben many keyes;

<sup>1-1</sup> þat þat CC. <sup>2</sup> omitted MM. <sup>3</sup> sperid MM. <sup>4</sup> foule MM. <sup>5</sup> herfor CC.

The keys are knowledge and power,

\*[p. 1365 MS.] given to Peter, afterwards to the apostles.

Without Peter's knowledge and good life, the Pope is porter of hell gates.

The knowledge must be of God's law.

The power does not consist in absolution,

but in teaching, preaching and re-proving.

siþ crist, þat may not synne, calleþ boþe þe keyes of heuene & þe gates of helle; and no doute to grete witt þe keyes of heuen ben vnderstonde witt & power, þat prestis han to telle men þe wille of god, & to wuarde aftur þis witt; and so god ȝaue to petre þes two keies for him & hise; and afturward god ȝaue to þe apostles þes two keyes for hem & hers. and þus antecrist auȝte to shame to chalenge onoly petres keyes, but he had passyngly witt & lijf aftur petur; for if he reuerse him in þise two, he is porter of helle gates. and þis witt þat crist spekiþ of stondeþ not in mannes lawe, ne in oþur curiouse lawes, as matematik,<sup>1</sup> or lawes of kynde, but it stondeþ in goddis lawe to holde men in mesur þerof, & to teche cristen men hou þei shulden lyue to god & man, & come to heuen. and I dar not seie for drede of god, þat þis power stondeþ in assoilyng & cursyng as men practisen to-daye; for petre forfendid to curse, & veed not þis assoilynge; but by autorite of god to preche & to teche cristis weie, & to repreue wickud men boþe in word & in dede; þat semeþ to be þe power þat god ȝaue petur & his felowes. and it semeþ to many men þat if a prest presume for pride þat he haþ passyngly þis power, in þat he<sup>2</sup> shewiþ þat he wantiþ it; but it semeþ þat iche prest þat telliþ trewly þe lawe<sup>3</sup> of god haþ þis power, more or lesse, aftur þat god wole ȝyue him, & mennes rules or mennes chesing<sup>4</sup> ben not gospel in þis poynt, ne any beleue þat þei ben soþe, if þe gospel grounde hem not; and þerfore kepe wele goddis<sup>5</sup> lawe, & lyue þou in bileue of crist. and þus sumwhat bi þise wordis may antecristis resoun be asoyled. But we sufficien not to shewe now þe errours þat ben grounded in þis mater.

Cm 12<sup>m</sup> MM.

Christ sent the ten lepers to the priest, an argument for shrift.

Austyn.

But ȝitt argueþ antecrist þat þis sentence is heresie, for crist bad ten leprouse men go & shewe hem to þe prestis; and bi þis he tauȝt opynly þat it nedid to be shriuen at prestis, and to þis crist gaue prestis power, but wherto but to assoyle? Here men seyne aftur austyn, þat no witt of holi

<sup>1</sup> makamete CC.

<sup>4</sup> clensyng CC.

<sup>2</sup> omitted CC.

<sup>5</sup> cristis MM.

<sup>3</sup> wille MM.



writt, but if [it] be literal witt, prouep ouȝt by autorite of it; but þe literal witt is þis: crist bad ten leprouse men go & shewe hem to prestis, as it was boden in þe \*olde lawe, but þise prestis in þe oolde lawe assoileden not rownyngly, as we don now, but bi signes of goddis lawe þei sheweden wheche men weren leprouse, & which weren not leprouse, and to her iugement shulden men stonde. but crist tauȝt in þis gospel þat he cam not to destruye þe lawe, but to fulfille it, as he tellip be-for bi mathewe; and to þis entente crist bad þe mesels go and shewe hem to prestis. and þus freris myȝten telle þe puple þat holy writt haȝ mystily<sup>1</sup> þis witt what euer þei wolen seye; and þus men tellen þat freris tellen þat what treuþe þat þei seyne, if it be noteful to þe puple, þenne þat treuþe is þe gospel; and þus alle synnes þat þe freris don, or any treuþe þat [þei] may teche men is þe gospel of crist. but god forbede þat it were so; for no drede þise mennes defautis ben soþe, & it is profitable þat þei ben knowen to þe puple, lest þat þei disceyue hem. þus men vndurstonden not þe gosselle of ihesu crist but þei taken þe lettir þer-off, & aftur vndurstonden it vp þe grammer, and seyntes haȝ tauȝt þat<sup>2</sup> þat furst witt is þe gospel. and gyue we to aduersaries here þat men shulden goo & shewe hem to prestis, for so men didnen bifore tyme boþe in þe oolde lawe & in þe newe, but hou shulde men take of þis to rounne wiþ<sup>3</sup> prestis & þus to be assoiled? and marke we wele þis gossels witt, & it semeþ opyn þerby þat þise ten cammen not to þe prestis; for crist he-ledde hem by þe weye, and so þis gospel techiþ vs hou crist him self clensiþ of synne; & to him is þis thanke propur, & neyþur to pope ne confessour; for crist takeþ a-wei þe synne, & þei not, but disceyuen men; & þus men shulden be aliens, as was þis samaritan, and turne aȝen & þanke crist, & not gyue money to þise prestis; for crist wole assoyle men wele, al if þei gon not þus to rome. for crist bi his godhed is in iche place of þe worlde, and bi þat he takeþ away

Scriptural proof must rest on the literal meaning.

\*[p. 137 MS.]

The lepers showed themselves to the priest as the judge of leprosy appointed by the old law.

Matt. v. 17.

Freris might thus make what they pleased out of Scripture.

Men cannot understand the gospel unless they take it literally.

Grant that men were to show themselves to the priest, it was not thus whisperingly.

The ten came not to be healed of the priest, for Christ healed them by the way. Then it is Christ that cleanseth from sin.

Men should thank Christ, and not give money to priests.

<sup>1</sup> iustly CC.

<sup>2</sup> & CC.

<sup>3</sup> wist CC.

Men need not  
make pilgrimages  
to Rome.

Gm 13<sup>m</sup> MM.  
\*[p. 127<sup>b</sup> MS.]  
Antichrist's  
arguments.  
James v. 16.  
Christ's order to  
his disciples to  
loose Lazarus,  
teaches that  
priests should  
absolve.  
Men confessed at  
John's baptism.

synne whenne he makij men able þer-to; & pilgrimage wiþ  
siche offrynge vnablij men oft to be assoyled of god.

\*But þitt argueþ antecrist þat Iames biddij men shriue  
her synnes; and no drede god biddij bi Iames þat iche  
synful man do so; & þat prestis shuld assoyle men techij  
crist in þe risynge of lazar, for crist bad to hise apostlis þat  
þei shulden vnknytt his bondis. and þus men shriuen in  
cristis tyme, whenne Ion baptist washed hem. why shuld  
not þitt men do so, bi þe fourme of holy churchē?

Answer.

Here men seyne þat it were good to holde þe fourme of  
hooly churchē, as men diden before þat tyme þat þe fend was  
vnbounden & þis lawe made. for þenne crist assoiled þicker  
men þenne he dide aftur þe tyme of þis lawe. and to þe first  
autorite þat is aleggid of Iames epistle; men shulden merke  
hou Iames biddij þat men shulden shriue iche to oþur þe  
synnes þat þei fellen inne, & þus þei shulden knowleche  
mekeli þe freelte þat þei weren inne, and not oon feyne as an  
ypocrite þat he were more hooly before a-noþur, & had vertu  
to forȝyue synne. & þis worde þat Iames spekiþ makij not  
for þe emperour prelatis; for bi þis word þat Iames spekiþ  
iche man shulde shriue him to his broþur, and knowleche  
mekely þe freelte þat he is inne. siþ crist seiþ þat iche  
man þat hiþer himsilf shal be lowid, hou shuld not þise  
emperour prelatis be lowid bi þe sentence of crist, siþ þei  
hiþen hemsilf wiþ-outen skil of þing þat is approprid to crist?  
and þus þise emperour prelatis synnen aȝen þis worde þat  
Iames biddij. And as a-nentis þe secound worde þat crist

James bids con-  
fess one to  
another.

The case of  
Lazarus shows  
that Christ re-  
serves to himself  
the giving of  
spiritual life,

bad to hise apostlis whenne he had quickened lazar, he brouȝt  
him out of his sepulchre al knyttid in hise bondis, & bad hem  
to vnbynde him. þis mysty witt of þise dedis tellij vnto  
true men þat crist appropriþ to himsilf to qwiken dede men  
gostly, & to make hem stonde in grace. but þitt crist leueþ  
bondis of synnes, þat ben yuel costoms to falle in synnes, and  
crist \*biddij apostlis & prestis to vnknytt þise bondis bi  
trewē preaching. but þis office is dispised<sup>1</sup> & cristes owne

but leaves men  
still bound in evil  
habits,

\*[p. 128 MS.]  
which priests  
should unloose  
by good preach-  
ing.

<sup>1</sup> suspended MM.

office is misse-taken; for now *prestis* *prechen* not to pise men þat ben *conuertid* bi grace of crist, but þei seyn þei fordon synne and þat is more þenne any *prechyng*e, and þus þei gon biforn crist, & leuen þe maundement þat he biddiþ, and *antecrist* can-not dispreue þis witt bi resoun ne godis lawe.

And as a-*mentis* þe þridde worde, þat men þat weren baptized of Ione *confesseden* here synnes, & so shulde we; I graunt þis word þat is seid, but þe gospel seiþ neþir þat þei shrouen her synnes to Ion, ne bi þis rounyng to *prestis*. but it is likly þat ychone of hem shryuen mekely his synne to oþur, and so her baptym was medeful.<sup>1</sup> & so what man shryueþ him mekely to god or to man, no drede god forgyueþ him his synne, & gyueþ him grace; but þis falleþ not euer more whenne a man shryueþ him to þe *emperour* clerk; ȝe, if he shryue him to þe pope. & þus alle autorites þat ben founden in goddis lawe, þat <sup>2</sup>techen þat<sup>2</sup> men shulden shryue hem, ben to graunt to þis witt; þat men shulden shryue hem to god, and in case to her broþur, whenne it profitiþ to hem. but *antecrist* shulde shame here þat if men shulden þus shryue hem, þenne þei shulden telle þe *emperour* clerkis in her eeris alle her synnes, & do what þei hidden hem do, for ellis god wole not assoile hem. if þou be a *prest* of cristis secte, holde þe payde of his lawe to teche his puple cristis gospel, al if þou feyne þee no<sup>3</sup> more power; for crist haþ gyue power I-nowe to his *prestis* to teche his church; & enioyned hem siche office þat gyueþ hem not occasioun to synne. & þus power þat *prestis* han standeþ not in transubstansinge of þe oste, ne in makyng of accidentis for to stonde bi hemself; for þis power graunted not god to crist ne to any apostle, and so crist haþ speciali power to do away mennes synne; & pise miracles þat ben feyned þat no man may see ne knowe, as þei waxen<sup>4</sup> without profit, so þei han no grounde in god.

The confession at John's baptism is not said to have been made privily to John.

All scripture teaches to confess to God, and to man if it be profitable.

Christ has given power to his priests to teach,

but this power does not lie in transubstantiating the Host, or making accidents stand of themselves (i.e. exist apart from substance).

These miracles that cannot be seen or tested are profitless and groundless.

Explicit *tractatus* <sup>5</sup>de confessione & penitencia.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> nedeful CC.

<sup>2-3</sup> omitted CC.

<sup>3</sup> omitted CC.

<sup>4</sup> weren MM.

<sup>5-6</sup> only in MM.

## XXIV.

## OF FAITH, HOPE AND CHARITY.

MR. ARNOLD thought this tract not improbably the work of Wyclif, but did not print it, because he "found it to be a remarkably dull composition and to contain not a single new idea." He may not be alone in this severe judgment; but after several fiercely polemical tracts, it is almost a relief to come upon a specimen of Wyclif's simple evangelical teaching. Even here his foes are not forgotten, and his attack on the friars, and on their teaching as to the Eucharist, marks the tract as a late one. I have very little doubt that it is authentic.

There is a curious reference in Chapter IV. to Antinomian opinions, which we should not have expected to be prevalent among Wyclif's hearers.

Copied from the MS. at New College, Oxford (Q), and collated with the Dublin MS. CC.

## SUMMARY.

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\*Sicut enim corpus sine spiritu moritur ita opera sine <sup>[p. 124 MS.]</sup>  
fide. iacobi 3°. fides sine operibus mortua est.<sup>1</sup>

[*Capitulum primum.*]

**F**or it is seide in holdynge of oure haly-day þat we schulde  
occupie þe tyme in prechyng<sup>2</sup> and preiynge<sup>3</sup> and deuoute  
herynge of þe lawe of god, and ouer þis<sup>4</sup> many freris, as  
bastardis to goddis lawe, tellen iapes or lesyngis & leuen þe  
gospel; herfore schulden men lerne of þre good<sup>4</sup> vertues, þat <sup>Paul's gospel telle</sup>  
þe gospel of poule clepiþ feiþ, hope, & charite. ffeþ is þe <sup>of three virtues,</sup>  
ground of alle oþer vertues; & þerfore poule clepiþ it schelde <sup>faith, hope and</sup>  
of alle<sup>5</sup> cristen men. ffor amonge sixe armures noon is more <sup>charity.</sup>  
nedeful. but feiþ may be taken on manye maneres. ¶ Sum <sup>Faith is ground of</sup>  
tyme feiþ is clepid þe truthe þat men<sup>6</sup> trowen, & so þer is <sup>all other virtues.</sup>  
a comune feiþ to alle cristen men. ¶ Sum tyme feiþ is <sup>Different mean-</sup>  
clepid vertu þat maken<sup>7</sup> trewe men, & so eche trewe man <sup>ings of the word</sup>  
haþ diuerse feiþ. and sum tyme feiþ is clepid oure <sup>'faith.'</sup>  
trowynge in werkys. and by þes þre membris may<sup>8</sup> þou  
knowe goddis lawe þat spekiþ of feiþ on<sup>9</sup> diuerse maneres.  
seynt poule clepiþ feiþ ground of goostly þingis þat men  
schulden hope to haue in heuen; and here men<sup>10</sup> seen hem  
not, but trowen bi word of god, if þei<sup>10</sup> seruen him treuly, to  
haue hem in heuen. and so specialye by feiþ ben men made  
trewe<sup>11</sup> to god; and whos[o] fayliþ in feiþ he is fals to god, <sup>[p. 124 MS.]</sup>  
& tristiþ not to hijs treuthe, as heþen men don not. and  
herfore seith seynt poule þat cristen mennus feiþ is mene of  
alle here gode werkis<sup>11</sup> þat þei here don. ffor seyntis by  
feiþ discourmfiteden rewmes, þe þe rewmes of þe fende; & <sup>[Heb. xi. 33.]</sup>  
þat is more maistri þan wyn rewmes of men, for enemyes ben  
moo & more koynte<sup>12</sup> in þer dedis bi wylis of here capteyns.

<sup>1</sup> no text in CC.    <sup>2,3</sup> omitted CC.    <sup>4</sup> omitted CC.    <sup>5</sup> goddis CC.  
<sup>6</sup> omitted CC.    <sup>7</sup> we CC.    <sup>8</sup> makij CC.    <sup>9</sup> maist CC.    <sup>10</sup> in CC.  
<sup>10-10</sup> omitted CC.    <sup>11</sup> werkis Q, vertues CC.    <sup>12</sup> queynt CC.

God cannot be served without faith.

You would take off your hat to a gracious letter from the king.

The commandments are a letter sent by God through Moses.

<sup>1</sup> & þus seyntis han wrouȝt faire & iust dedis,<sup>1</sup> for noman may laste in harde lif for god but if he haue feiþ, bi whiche he lastiþ so; ne noman may serue blis of god but if he haue feiþ, bi whiche he seruiþ it; and schortly noman synniþ aȝenus god but if<sup>2</sup> he fayle in feiþ, þat groundiþ goddis werkis. ¶ as if þou haddist a lettre þat þi kynge sent þee seelid wiþ hijs priuey seele, & worschipid þee myche & hiȝt þee greet eritage to be at<sup>3</sup> hijs retenu & serue hym treuly, þou woldest don of þin hoode and kisse hijs seel for hope of rewarde. god is miche more þan any lord of erthe; he sent a lettre to man by moyses hijs messangere, þat is more worþ þan any pope or cardynal. hijs lettre is hijs mawndementis, & grace in moyses soule is hijs priue seel, better þen eny kyngis signe. ¶ hijs seruice is liȝt & hijs eritage is myche, for it is þe blis of heuen lastyng 'wiþ-uten ende,'<sup>4</sup> and here-of schulden men not fayle wiþ-uten greet forfeiture. take<sup>5</sup> hed to mennus feiþ how bisily þei traueylen for godes & worschip of þe worlde, & leue traueyle to god, & þou mayst wel see þat feiþ feilliþ hem.

### Capitulum 2<sup>m</sup>.

Faith may fall in three ways.  
1. By default.

2. It may be too thin, so that it cannot resist the darts of the enemy.

1°. **B**ut in þre maneres may mennus feiþ fayle. Sum faylen in feiþ for defaute of it; as<sup>6</sup> men þat trowen not to god þat he wil reward hem of þe blis of heuen for her trewe seruice. 2°. ¶ sum men faylen in feiþ, for it is so þynne, & 'eke liȝt' to perische wiþ dart by sauȝt of þin enemy; as men þat ben assaylid by her flesche or by þe world, or in lustis or in peynes ȝyuen it vp to<sup>7</sup> sone, for litil trist þat þei han in mede of her lord. and herfore crist often tymes reprouyde hys apostlis for litilnesse of her feiþ, whan þei fayleden to trist on hym. 3°. ¶ and sum<sup>8</sup> faylen in

<sup>1-1</sup> omitted Q.

<sup>4-4</sup> for euer CC.

<sup>7-7</sup> eep CC.

<sup>2</sup> omitted Q.

<sup>5</sup> Q. inserts wa.

<sup>8</sup> omitted Q.

<sup>3</sup> omitted Q.

<sup>6</sup> of KK.

<sup>9</sup> summen CC.

here feiþ þat han her scheld holid,<sup>1</sup> & by spere of here enemye þei ben often kyld; & ben suche men þat trowen many trowþes, & in sum \*þei faylen as men out of here feiþ; for as he þat byndiþ hym to kepe goddis hestis mut kepe hem alle, as seynt Iames seiþ, so he þat byndiþ him to feiþ of hijs god, mut kepe it al hoole stify & in ordre. ffor if þi schelde were at þi backe, þou myztist sone be kilde. for þe fendes of helle trowen alle þat we trowen, but hem failen charite to bynde her schelde in ordre, & herfore ben þei dampned by<sup>2</sup> her defourmed scheeld. ¶ & herfore schulden we trowe alle þe lawe of god, & trowe þat it is trewe by every part of it;<sup>3</sup> for if þou trowe myche of it, & trowist þat sum is fals, by þis hoole of þi schelde art þou deed to god; ¶ as freris þat trowen many articlis of þe<sup>4</sup> treuthe & faylen in þe treuþe of þe sacrid hoost, schal be dampnyd herfore But if þei turne aȝen & trowe in wordes of crist, þat seiþ: "þis is my bodye." but nowe freris trowen noþer þat þis oost is brede ne þe<sup>5</sup> bodye of crist, ne noþer of þis may be; but crist seiþ surely: "þis breed is my bodye." but hou ar þei not heretikis þat trowen aȝen crist here? ¶ and þus everyche man haþ a maner of feiþ, syn eche man trowiþ þat god & alle þingis ben, but hijs feiþ is rente in particuler erroures þat trowiþ fals of þe feiþ, by any part of it. and so oure good god byndiþ vs not to euermore trowen & speecyaly eche article of þe treuþe, for sum ben so sutil þat first in blis of heuen seyntis schulen knowe hem þat now g[e]neraly trowen hem. for if þou trowist in þi god, þat trowþe wil suffice þee; but noman trowiþ in god but he þat loueþ him & hopeþ by his good lif to haue<sup>6</sup> þe blis of heuen.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>3</sup> The shield may have holes in it, i.e. faith may be imperfect in some points.  
[P. 125 MS.]

[James II. 10.]

The devils believe but have not charity.

We must believe all the law of God.

Friars fall in belief as to the Host,

which they believe to be neither bread nor Christ's body.

General belief enough.  
Some articles so subtle that we shall know them first in heaven.

### [Capitulum 3<sup>m</sup>.]

**H**ope is þe secounde vortu þat god himself axiþ, & is ful diuerse fro feiþ þat we han spokun of. ffor feiþ is of þingis þat was & ben & schul be, but hope is al only of þingis þat

Difference between Hope and Faith.

<sup>1</sup> holde Q.

<sup>2</sup> for CC.

<sup>3</sup> per-of CC.

<sup>4</sup> omitted Q.

<sup>5</sup> omitted CC.

<sup>6</sup> soþli CC.

<sup>7</sup> in Q.

<sup>8</sup> blisse of god CC.

ben to come. as we trowen þat god made þe world of nouȝt,  
 & we trowen þat crist is now bodily in heuen, & schal  
 enuermore be after þe 'day of' dom. ¶ also feiþ is bope of  
 gode þing & euyl, bope of him þat haþ feiþ & of oþer  
 creaturis, but hope is al only of hym þat haþ hope and  
 only of good þinge in þe blis of heuen. as we trowen þat  
 \* [p. 1265 MS.] many men schul \* be dampned in helle, & þat many oþur  
 schul be sauēd in heuen; but noþur we hopen þis damp-  
 naciōn ne þis saluaciōn, for we hopen al only þat towchiþ  
 oure owne blis. and so trowthe of cristen men puttiþ hem  
 owte of dowte, & makith hem so surely trowe<sup>2</sup> here bileue,  
 þat þei schulden stonde for þis treuþe, to deef of here bodye.  
 ¶ but so it is not of hope. if we looken wel, as neþer we  
 witen ne we trowe now to be sauēd, & þit we hopen it  
 wiþ-uten ony dowte. and so hope is werke of soule bi-neþe  
 oure bileue, & so by-nethe knowynge but a-bouen doutinge.  
 and so hope of erþely þinge is not vertu of hope, but  
 comunely it smacchiþ synne, for it lettiþ hope of heuen.  
 and so it is all diuerse to hope and to trowe; but þis is  
 a sutil mater to clerkis for to knowe, but comune<sup>3</sup> sentence  
 here-of<sup>4</sup> sufficiþ to oþure men.

Nota bene.

Hope is less than  
 belief or know-  
 ledge, but above  
 doubt.

### Capitulum 4<sup>m</sup>.

[B]vt siþ<sup>4</sup> philosopheres seyn þat contraries han oon lore,  
 feiþ and hope techen vs to knowe contraries of hem. ffeith  
 haþ in fidelite contrarie to him, and hope haþ desperaciōn  
 as his contrarie. and as feiþ is ground of alle oþur vertues,  
 so in-fidelite is ground of alle oþur synnes. ¶ and herfor  
 seiþ crist þat god schal reprove þe worlde first of þis synne,  
 for it groundiþ alle oþere. 'wan-hope of men is a greet synne,  
 for noman is dampned wiþ-uten þis wanhope. for he þat  
 lastiþ in þis<sup>7</sup> synne to his lyues ende, and haþe no sorowe

[John xvi. 8.]

<sup>1-1</sup> omitted CC.<sup>4</sup> omitted CC.<sup>2</sup> thorowe Q.<sup>5</sup> Q inserts for.<sup>2-3</sup> speche CC.<sup>6</sup> hys Q.



of hijs synne ne hope to haue forgyu[n]es, he synneþ aȝen þe holy goost; þat neuer schal be forȝifen him, noþer in þis worlde ne in þe toþur, as crist him silf seiþ. and many þer ben þat synnen in þis synne longe bifore þei dien. ¶ but þanne it lastiþ euere, as eche man þat god knowiþ to be dampned in helle, beriþ euere-lastinge synne aȝen þe holy gost; for as þe holy gost is þe laste persone of god, after whom comeþ noon oþur, so it is of þis synne. ffor no \*man may synne after þis last<sup>1</sup> synne. ¶ and so by two weyes fallen men in despayre. 1°. Sum for þei trowen not in þe mercy of god; & þes ben cayms childre & seyn her synne is more þan her dissert is to serue blis or ellis goddis mercy. 2°. and sum synnen in dispeyre aȝen<sup>2</sup> riȝtwisnes<sup>3</sup> of god; as þes þat seyn in her lif: “late me synne ynowe, for god wole neuere lese þat he haþ<sup>4</sup> dere bouȝt.” and so alle þat schul ben dampned ben euere more in synnyng aȝen þe holy gost, & euere in despeyringe. ¶ as if a man drof continually in-to þe erþe a stake, til he were in dispeire þat he myȝt drawe it vp. þe stake is þe synne hardud in mannus hert; þe malle þat he driueþ it wiþ is newe rehersyng of synne; and suche at þe ende of her lif lacken power & grace to trist in helpe of þer god and hope to be sauȝd.

Despair is the sin  
against the Holy  
Ghost.

[Matt. xli. 31.]

\*[p. 126 MS]

Despair may  
come from—  
1. Not believing  
in God's mercy.

2. Not believing  
in God's will to  
punish sin.

### [Capitulum 5<sup>m</sup>.]

[p]E þridde v<sup>r</sup>tu of god is loue or<sup>4</sup> charite, and it haþ two braunchis, as loue of god & loue of man. & beste mene to kepe þis loue were man forto lerne & loue forto kepe two tables of goddis lawes,<sup>5</sup> for bi þes & ellis not kepiþ man him in charite. and þis v<sup>r</sup>tu clopiþ man at domus-day wiþ bride-clopiþ, & þis clope may neuere be lost in þis world ne in þe toþure. ffor noman may come to heuene but he haue þis clopinge, ne no man may haue þis clothe, but if he come to heuen; & so men þat schulen be dampned han but

Love is twofold:  
of God and man.

This virtue  
clothes man in  
the wedding gar-  
ment,  
without which  
he cannot enter  
heaven.

<sup>1</sup> omitted Q. <sup>2</sup> riȝtfulnesse CC. <sup>3</sup> omitted Q. <sup>4</sup> & Q. <sup>5</sup> heistis CC.

feyned charite. But lyue wele after goddis lawe & hope to haue þis<sup>1</sup> loue, for no man schal knowe ne trowe to haue it but if god wole telle him priueyly. ¶ and so freris, þat louen more her habite þat þei han ordeyned hem þan þe cloþe of charite þat god haþ schapen his sones, ben yuel disposid to haue þis<sup>2</sup> cloþe of charite; Siþ þer loue is turned amys to charge more here habite, to lesyn it or leeuene it, to cloþe þer-wiþ þer bodye, þan to lese þis charite to cloþe þer-wiþ þer soule; for often þei lese charite in presens of man, but if þei losten þis habite þus, as þei falsly feynen, þei were opyn apostates and losten þe luf of god, for as þei feynen falsly god \*loueþ more þis cloþinge þan cloþinge of þer soule wiþ þis cloþe of charite; and þis is open heresie by many kyn skyllles. but here men douten comunly where men schuld loue þes heretikys, but it is no drede þat ne men schulde loue þer kynde & hate þe same kynde in þat þat þei ben so yuel, and so þe persones bi hem-silf schulden be loued in charite, & here synnes by hemsilf schulden men hate for goddis loue.<sup>3</sup> ffor he is not frend to crist þat loueþ þus hijs enemye; and þus he is frend to þe frere þat hatij þus his synne & worchij to distrie it & purge him þer-fro. ¶ and þis moueþ many men to speke of þre heresies þat many freres be smyttid inne, & contrarien þes þre<sup>4</sup> vertues. ffor who myȝt more contrarie seiþ þan sey þat crist seiþ fals whan he seiþ þat "þis brede is myn owne bodye," for þis may neþer be<sup>5</sup> brede ne þe bodi of crist, but it is accident or nouȝt, as freres feynen falsly. & þus þei chesen hem a place to falsen crist in hijs visage, and ierom wiþ oþur seyntis þat tellen þis wit of crist. ffreres seyn priueyly þat þei spake here eresie, siþen anticrist þer mayster seiþ euen þe contrarie. ¶ þe secounde vertu of þes þre<sup>6</sup> many freres reuersen,<sup>7</sup> for crist tauȝt in hijs lawe þat men schulde not begge, but holde euen his ordre, & þei schulde come to heuen; þes<sup>8</sup> freres seyn þe contrarie, & grownden

Friars love their habit more than the garment of charity.

\*[p. 1265 MS.]

We should love the friars' persons, but hate their sins.

Men reverse these three virtues:

Faith in the matter of the Host,

Hope in begging,

<sup>1</sup> CC. inserts last.

<sup>2</sup> omitted Q.

<sup>3</sup> þe Q.

<sup>4</sup> moueþ freres to reuersen Q.

<sup>5</sup> sake CC.

<sup>6</sup> omitted Q.

<sup>7</sup> þe Q.

hem an ordre of þer wilful beggyng, bi men þat han no nede; and herbi schulde men hope to sitt hye in heuen, for, as þei lien falaly, crist beggid<sup>1</sup> þus. ¶ þe þridde of þes vertues is contraried bi freres, siþen it is no charite to falaly passe crist. for crist seiþ to hijs cosyns þat by hijs manhed he had [Matt. xx. 23.] no power to ȝyue hem leue to sit on hijs riȝt<sup>2</sup> side, but to þe godhed in hijs fadure is propred þis power; but freres seyn opunly by letteres of here fraternite þat þei ȝyuen þer breþeren leue to haue part of þer blis; and þis myȝt þei not do but if þei ȝouen men leue to sitt on þe riȝt hond of crist as if þei passed him. & þis sownes not charite but luciferes pride.

Charity in giving letters of fraternity.

and so claiming power beyond that of Christ.

### [Capitulum 6<sup>m</sup>.]

\* **B**vȝt siȝ cloþinge of þis loue is myche loued of god, & more \* [p. 127 MS.] worþe to man þan al þis worldes richessis, man schuld ful bisilly knowe proprietees of þis loue. but poule, þat was rauesched vnto þe þrid heuen, & herde derne wordes of god, þat ben not here leful vs forto speke, telliþ sixtene proprietes þat suen þis charite. þe first is þat charite is patient of wronges. for al oure charite mut be ensaumpled of crist; but crist was so patient, as seynt petre seiþ, þat whan he was mys-said he cursid not aȝen, ne when he suffrid wronges he manassid not aȝen. O what charite haþ he to suffre wronge for cristis loue þat wol not suffre a liȝt word, but ȝeld a worse aȝen? ¶ þe secounde propriete is þis: þat charite is benyngne. for it is not ynow to suffre, for so don þeſis, but do good in soule aȝenus yuel suffrid; for þat is good loue of þe fire of charite, & is clepid benigne by propriete of word. and herefore clerkis seyn þat þer ben þree lawes; þe first is lawe of oure good<sup>3</sup> god to do good for yuy; þe toþure is lawe of þe worlde, to do good for good & yuel for yuel, as mannus maner is; þe þrid is þe deuelis lawe, to do yuel for good, & þis is maner of men whan þei ben turned to deuelis. þe

Properties of charity as told by St. Paul. [2 Cor. xii. 2.] [1 Cor. xiii. 4.]

1. Is patient of wrong.

[1 Peter ii. 23.]

2. Is benign.

<sup>1</sup> CC. inserts 'not.'

<sup>2</sup> omitted CC.

<sup>3</sup> omitted Q.

3. Envieth not. brid *propirte* þat sueþ þis secounde is þat charite haþe noon enuye to noon kyn þinge, for it loueþ wel god & alle goddis creatures.
4. Hurteth not. ¶ þe fourþe *propirte* þat sueþ of þis riche *vertu* is þat charite wiþ-uten forþe wirchiþ not schrewidly for as þis first þock bigynniþ wiþ paciens, & siþen goiþ into worchinge of a mannes soule, so mut þis oþur þoc forsake yuel wiþ-inne, & 'also wiþ-oute' bi ordre of god. þe fyueþ maner of charite stondeþ in þis, þat it bolneþ not wiþ pride, syn it is þus patient. & þe sixte sueþ here-of, þat it coueitþ not worldly worschip; for al worschipe of charite sche puttþ oonly<sup>3</sup> in god. þe seuene condicion þat sueþ þis<sup>3</sup> charite is þat it sekþ not *propre* godes to hir silf, but sekþ worschip to god & *profyte* to his chirche. ¶ þe eyt *propirte* of charite stondiþ in þis, þat charite wrathiþ þer<sup>4</sup> not al if it suffre wronge, and þerfore it is list to men to stande with pees & charite. þe neynt *propirte* of charite is deppers þan þes oþere, þat it þenkiþ not yuel, for siche þouȝt turneþ to yuel; as iob maad couenaunt to þenke not on a virgyne. ¶ þe \*tentþ *propirte* þat suiþ þis *vertu* of charite is þat sche ioyethe not of wickidnesse, as augelus in heuen ioyen of payn of fendis but not of here wickidnesse. & þerfore þis condicion sueþ after charite, þat it ioyeþ wiþ god of trowþe þat he loueþ. ¶ þe twelþe condicion þat sueþ þis charite is þat sche takeþ mekely what euere þing þat comeþ hir to. þe þrittente condicions stondiþ in þis, þat charite trowiþ al þat euere god seiþ; and siþ no þinge is good but þat god seiþ, charite trowiþ alle good þing,<sup>5</sup> þe *profyte* of synnes. ffor men þat dreden god, if þei fallen in synne, þei ben more ware þat þei synnen not eft,<sup>6</sup> & þanken more god of hijs gracious helpe, & alle medeful dedis haue þei part off. ¶ þe fourtenþ condicion þat sueþ after charite stondiþ in þis poynt, þat sche hopiþ alle þinge turneþ to good of goddis childur þat dreden him in loue. þe fiftente condicion
- [8.] Is not wasteful.
- [9.] Thinketh no evil.
- \*[p. 127b MR.]  
10. Rejoiceth not in iniquity,
- [11.] but rejoiceth in the truth.
12. Beareth all things.
- [13.] Believeth all things.
14. Hopeth all things.
- [15.] Endureth all things.

<sup>1-3</sup> siþ yuel dede wiþoute CC.<sup>4</sup> omitted Q.<sup>2</sup> hoonly CC.<sup>5</sup> omitted Q.<sup>3</sup> in Q.<sup>6</sup> ofte Q.

þat sueþ þis charite is þat sche susteyneþ wiþ wille alle  
 harmes þat comeþ, þhe<sup>1</sup> sche is not discourfortid if goddis  
 helpe bidith longe. ¶ and so þe laste condicion þat sueþ þis  
 blessid vertu is þat sche fallith neuer doun, but lastith forþe  
 for euere in þis world & in þe toþurs, as loue of god failith not.  
 & if a man knewe<sup>2</sup> no more of goddis lawe but þise sixtene  
 condicions & bisyede him to kepe hem, he myȝt lityly come to  
 heuen & wite who went amys.

Expliciunt ffeith hope & charite.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> þhit Q.

<sup>2</sup> koude CC.

<sup>3</sup> only in CC.

## XXV.

## DE SACRAMENTO ALTARIS.

IN this little tract Wyclif sums up the difference between his teaching on the Eucharist and that of the friars. It is curious to see him taking up the position of a loyal son of the Church, and complaining that his adversaries accuse the Pope and the Court of Rome of heresy. As the tract is evidently a fragment, it may be that in the larger piece from which it was taken he had alleged some utterance of the Roman see in his favour; perhaps the oath of Berengarius, to which he often appealed, although his opponents might have cited it on their side with at least equal confidence.

Copied from the Bodleian MS. (A), and collated with the Dublin MS. (AA).

## SUMMARY.

The friars say that the bread which Christ broke is neither bread nor his body	..... p.	357
They accuse the Church of sharing their heresy	.....	357
The true faith is that the Host is both bread and Christ's body	.....	357

## De sacramento altaris corpus domini.

\* **O**f <sup>1</sup>al þe<sup>1</sup> feiþ of þe gospel gederen trewe men, wiþ opyne \*<sup>[p. 96 MS.]</sup> confescioun of þes newe ordris, þat men shulden rette hem These new orders are heretikes. eretikis, & so not comyne wiþ hem. for þei denyen þe gospel & comyn bileue, þat þat breed þat crist took in hise hondis They deny that the bread that Christ broke was his body; & blesside it & brac it & ȝaf it to hise disciplis for to ete, was his owne bodi bi vertu of his wordis. & þus þei denyen þat þe oost sacrid, whijt & round, þat bifore was breed, is maad goddis bodi bi uertu of hise wordis. but þei seien þat þere is but say that the host is accident goddis bodi, & þat is not goddis bodi, but it is nouȝt or or nothing. accident worse þan ony breed; & þus þei accusen þe court of rome, bishops & prelatiſ, & seien þat þei shulden seiſe so bi cristen mennys bileue. & no wondir is, siþ þes freris accuseden þer breþeren & þei<sup>2</sup> bigan first at crist; & seiden þat he was as<sup>3</sup> an eretyk, & oure king wiþ his rewme, but hem shamede to seiſe þis openli, but þei seiden þis priuylly. & siþ þei han lastid so longe in þis errour \*cristen men \*<sup>[p. 97 MS.]</sup> shulden flee hem as heþen men out of þe feiþ. & if þei Christian men should avoid them. somene symple men for þis accusing, symple men seien þat þei supposen freris siche, but þei affermen not hem sich; but eydence þei han of þis errour in bileue, & many oþere þat freris seien, and if þis be not soþ, late þes freris purgen hem, for we han herd ofte-tymes many freris techen þus.<sup>4</sup> Crist & his apostlis & þe olde seintis þat weren til þat þe fend was vnboundun, & þe courte of rome bi open witnesse of her lawe: techen þis bileue; þat þe sacrid oost whijt & round þat men seen in þe preestis hondes is veri goddis bodi in forme of breed. but freris, siþ þe fend fader of lesyngis was vnboundun, seien þat it is an accident wiþ-outen suȝet or nouȝt, & mai in

<sup>1</sup>-<sup>1</sup> omitted AA.<sup>3</sup> omitted AA.<sup>2</sup> omitted AA.<sup>4</sup> AA. breaks off here.

noo wise be goddis bodi; & so þei glosen þe wordis of holi writt euen to þe contrarie, & þei leuen þe wordis of holi writt, & chesen hem newe founden termes of hem-silf, & seien þat þei ben soþ, but þe wordis of holi writt ben false & ful of eresie; and so þei seien priuyli þat crist & hise apostlis & þes oolde seintis & þe court of rome weren opyn eretikes.



## XXVI.

## THE CLERGY MAY NOT HOLD PROPERTY.

WITH AN APPENDIX ON THE WRONGFULNESS OF THEIR UNDERTAKING  
SECULAR WORK.

No external evidence authorizes us to attribute this tract to Wyclif. It does not even derive credit from being bound up with other works believed to be his, since it fills the little volume in which only it is found.

Dr. Shirley admitted it to his catalogue on the ground of style, and it is only on that ground, and for its general consonance with Wyclif's habits of thought, that it can be ascribed to him. I find it very difficult to arrive at a decided opinion. On the one hand, it is more orderly and less vivacious than most of Wyclif's pamphlets; with scarcely any of his characteristic outbursts of lament over abuses or invectives against those who practise them. It relies more, too, on citations of authorities than is his custom. On the other hand, there are passages that look like his work, such as (p. 368) the story of the bishop who looked forward to the time when the gentry should be the hired soldiers of the Church, and the warning (p. 372) that when the clergy have once got power, "the secular party may go pipe with an ivy-leaf," (otherwise whistle for) the return of any part of it.

In substance the tract is purely Wyclifite, but it has no trace of his latest developments. If it is by the master, it must be one of the earliest compositions in this volume, as it has much more likeness to his writings of 1365-1375 than to those of his latest years. The difference will be strongly felt if it is compared with the *Supplementum Trialogi*, which deals with the same subject.

Copied from the Lambeth MS. (LL).

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\*[p. 2 MS.] \*Fundamentum aliud nemo potest ponere preter id  
[1 Cor. III. 11.] quod positum est quod est cristus Jhesus.

[*Capitulum i.*]

Almyȝty god þe trinyte, fadir, sonne and holy gooste,  
The Church is founded on three states, answering to the three persons of the Trinity. Secular lords answer to the Father— boþe in þe olde lawe and þe newe haþ fowndid his chirche  
Rom. xiii. [4.] up-on þre statis, awnswerynge or acordynge to þes þre persones and her propertes. So þat to þe fadir in trinyte, to whom is aproper power, awnsweryþ þe state of seculer lordis, fro þe hiȝest knyȝte, þat is, or schuld be, þe emperoure, to þe lowest sqwyer þat by wai of office of his state berip þe swerde. For þis state in holy chirche saynt poule callip powers, and saiþ þat þis power berip þe swerde not wiþ-owte cause, but to avenge þe wraþ of god in-to hym  
\*[p. 2b MS.] þat misdoip, \*and to supporte and mayntene hym þat wel doþe. þis is þe sentence of poule þere. And þis state or power is þe vicar of þe god-heede, as it may be growndid here. And as saynt Austyn saiþ in þe booke of qwestyons of þe olde lawe and þe newe, and in oþer dyuers placis. And so as it bylongip to þe godheed of criste to avenge hym on his ennemys and to rewarde his trewe saruandis, as god  
[Rom. xii. 19.] hymselfe saiþ, as þe apostle rehersiþ: "To me," saiþ god, "it longip to do vengeance and I schal rewarde." And also þe prophete seiþ þat "god shal rewarde euery man aftir his werkis." So it by-longip here up-on erþe to þe state of  
who are God's vicars for punishing and rewarding. seculer lordis, as vicars of þe godhede, to do in ponyshynge and rewardynge to \*þe ennemyes and seruandis of god.  
\*[p. 3 MS.] To þe secunde persone in trinyte, to whom is aproper wisdam or kunnyng, awnsweryþ þe state of þe clergy or of presthode; þe whiche by bissey study and contemplacyon schulde gete hem heuenly kunnyng, wherby þai schulde teche þe peple þe way to heuen and lede hem þer-inne.  
To the Son answers the estate of clergy.

And herfor seiþ god by his prophete Malachie: "*Labis sacerdotis custodiunt scienciam, et legem exquirunt ex ore ejus, quis angelus domini exercituum est*"—"þe lippis of þe prest kepyn kunnyng, and the pepille schul seke þe lawe of his mouþe, for he is þe awngell of god." And herfor criste, supposynge þat þis heuenly kunnyng schulde be in the state of presthode, commaundid hem alle in his ascencyon in þo wordis þat he saide to \*his apostles, and in hem to alle \*[p. 33 MS.] oþer prestis, as saynt awstyn seiþ in a sermon þat bigynneþ Austin. þus: "*Si diligenter attendites etcetera*," þat þai schulden teche and preche þe gospells to his peple, þe whiche gospel is heuenly kunnyng. For þis state in þe chirche is þe vicar of þe manhede of criste, as saynt austyn seiþ in a booke þat is alegyd to-fore. And so as criste cam in his manhede to teche and preche þe gospells and to suffre meekly persecucion þerfore, so schulde þe state of prestis, þat ben vicaris of his manhede, do as he commaundit hem in his ascencyon and oft-times byfore. which is the vicar of Christ's manhood, and should follow his commands.

To þe þridde persone in trinite, to whom is apropryd true loue or goode wille to þe fadir & sonne, \*awnsweriþ þe state of þe comonte, þe whiche owiþ true loue & obedyente wille to þe statis of lordis & prestis, as saynt poule techeþ, saynge: "*Serui obedite dominis vestris carnalibus cum omni timore et tremore*," þat is: "Seruandis obeyiþ to þour temporalle lordis wiþ alle drede and tremblyng." Also saynt poule seiþ þus: "*Obedite prepositis vestris; ipsi enim vigilant tanquam reddituri rationem pro animabus vestris*:" þat is: "obeiþ to þoure souereyns; forsoþe þai waken as for to ȝeue acowntis for þoure soulis." By þes souereyns is undirstonde þe state of presthode; þe whiche schulde bisyly wake in studiynge and prechyng of goddis lawe to alle cristen peple, and to ȝeue goode ensauple in her lyuynge. And in þis euery man \*is bonden to obey to her doctrine. And þerfore poule seiþ: "Be ȝe fylowers of me as I am of criste." And eft he seiþ: "þou; we or an awngelle of heuen preche to þou bysidis þat þat we han prechid, be he acursid." And To the Holy Ghost answers \*[p. 4 MS.] the state of the commons. Eph. vi. [5.] Heb. xiii. [17.] [1 Cor. xi. 1.] Gal. i. [3.]

Priests should  
have no worldly  
lordships.

These three states  
are enough.

\*[p. 5 MS.]

so bi þis sentence *prestis* schulden not haue worldly lorde-  
schippis; siþ cristis and his apostles han uttirly forfendid hem,  
boþe in her lyuynge and techynge, as it suiþ playnly her-aftir.  
For it was neuer cristis lore to make *prestis* riche and  
knyȝtis pore. And so þes þre statis ben, or schulde be,  
sufficient in goddis chirche; or ellis men mosten say þat god  
is and was fawty in ordenance of boþe his lawis. And is  
full euydence and open tooknyng þat god takij þis or-  
denance in his chirche \*as full sufficient, and in no wise  
fawtye in scarste or excesse þer-of, cristis, þe wisdom of þe  
trinyte, by whiche wisdom þe chirche is ordend and fowndid  
up-on þes þre statis, techij us in all his lawe to kepe &  
to mayntene þis ordenance with-owten addyng þer-to or  
abregyng þer-fro. wherfor poule saiþ: "no man may  
putt an oþer grounde bysidis þat þat is putt, þe whiche is  
cristis ihesu."

### Capitulum ij.

In the old law  
God assigned all  
possessions to the  
laity.

\*[p. 55 MS.]  
None to the  
priests,  
Num. xviii. [20.]

who were to live  
of the offerings  
to God,

such as first fruits  
and tithes,

Ere it schal be schewid how god hatij worldly lordeschip in  
h þe state of his clergie, þat schulde performe the perfeccyon  
of þe gospell. For in þe olde lawe, wher god made an  
ordynance how & wher-wiþ þai schulde lyue in every state,  
he assigned þe worldly possescyons to þe \*seculer party, and  
bad þat *prestis* schulde by no way haue eny possescions wiþ  
þat oþer partye of þe peple. Saue þe peple was chargid of  
god to ordeyn þe *prestis* and deeknys housis, not to be lordis  
of hem but to dwelle in hem. And on þe same wise þai  
hadden subarbis to fede þer þe beestis þat schuld be offred  
sacrifice to god in þe temple. And god saide he wolde be þe  
parte of þe *prestis* and deknys; þat is to mene, þat þo þingis  
þat I schal assigne to hem, þe whiche þingis ben offred to me,  
schal be her parte and her lyuynge. And so god assignyd to  
þe *prestis* and deknys þe first fruytis and tipis and oþer  
certeyn deuocyons of þe peple, þe whiche was lijfode I-

now;e \*for hem wiþ alle her seruandis and oþer meyn;e. \*[p. 6 MS.]  
 And he chargid sore and harde þe peple to þenke on his clerigi, and þat þai defraude not hem of þe parte þat god haþ assignyd to hem. For þai hadden noone oþer possesyon amonge þe oþer peple, ne eny schuld haue. So þat goddis parte was þus assignyd to þe trybe or kynrede of leuy; of þe whiche kynrede wern goddis prestis in þe old lawe, and of noone oþere. And þis ordynance of god as tochyng þe liflode of prestis was kept ful streytly, so far forþe þat þo þingis þat wer offrid to god in þe temple by deuocyon of þe peple, þe whiche wer not by þe lawe of god expressly assigned to the kynrede of leuy, weren kept \*fro þe use of þat \*[p. 65 MS.]  
 kynrede to þe comon profete of alle þe peple; as to þe repaire of þe temple, and to rawnson þe kyng and þe rewme at nede, as scripture berij witnesse in the tyme of goode kyngis Joas & Josias. For siþ god had assigned lyflode to þe kynrede of leuy aftir his owne witte, and he may not be fawty in his worching or ordenance, it had ben a dampnable presumption for to haue ordend more liflode to hem. And not-wistondinge þat kyng dauid, purposynge to encrease þe worschip of god in his peple, ordend syngers and players in dyuers musical instrumentis to serue byfore god in þe temple; þit presumyd he not to take eny þinge þat god had assigned to þe temporall parte of his peple, and endowe wiþ siche goodis þes \*mynystres of þe temple; but he chese þes men \*[p. 7 MS.]  
 of þe tribe or kynrede of leuy and lett hem lyue on her owne parte, and so kept þe temporalte hoole wiþ-owte eny peyr-ynge þerof. And salamon his sonne, the wisest kyng þat euer was, dide þe same. And siþ kyng dauid, þe chosen of god aftir his owne herte & full of þe spirite of prophecie, and salamon his wise sonne also, durste not chawng þe ordenance of þe goodis mouable and vnmouable, þe whiche god had bytake to her gouernance, and make prestis ryche, as þou; god had not sufficiently ordend for hem in his lawe. And wiþ þis, not-wistondynge þat kyng dauid was so fulle of vertuous and kyngly condicions þat he is sett in scripture as

which God charged the people strongly to pay.

The priests might not even have offerings unless expressly assigned to them.

4 Kings xii. [4-15] and xxii. [4-7.]

Example of David,

and of Solomon,

who would not alienate goods given to them.

\*[p. 7b MS.]  
Our kings should  
not dare to do  
otherwise.

The old law in  
this is confirmed  
by the new.  
\*[p. 8 MS.]

This point is a  
part of the moral  
law, not to be  
destroyed or dis-  
pensid with.

Christ and his  
'college' kept  
this law.

Whence did  
monks, canons,  
etc., get exemp-  
tion from it?

\*[p. 8b MS.]

Num. xviii. [20.]

a patrone & ensauple \* of alle goode kyngis, how dar oure kyngis, þat han not þes ȝiftis of god, so expresly aȝens goddis lawe, þe olde and þe newe, presume to ouerturne all the gloriousse ordinance of god a-bowte siche temporaltes, and make the state of presthode lordis aȝens þe lyfe and þe lore of criste and his apostles, and aȝens þe proces of þe olde lawe in þis poynte, confermyd bi þe newe? In whiche he haþ so openly, in worde, dede, and in ensauple, tauȝte and commaundit hem þat þai schuld not be lordis so. And understonde þu here, þat whan þer is eny þinge dampned of god in þe olde lawe, if þe same be dampnyd in þe newe, alle þe euydence þat ben aȝen syche a defawte in þe olde lawe ben euen aȝens þe same \* in þe newe. And so all þe lawis þat god ȝaue by moyses aȝens þe worldly lordeschip of prestis of þe olde lawe be euen aȝens þis, þat prestis schulde be lordis so in þe newe lawe. Siþ þat moyses lawe is moralle in þis poynte, þat longeþ to þe perfeccyon of presthode, criste myȝte not distroy þes lawis neiþer dispens wiþ hem, þat prestis schulden not now be bunden to þes lawis. And siþ criste and his colage myȝt not be dispensid wiþ ne be exempte fro þe bondis of þe olde lawe in þis mater, I merueyle wher þe pryuelegis comen alonde wherby owre colagis of monkis, chanons or eny oþer endowid prestis þat dwellen in siche conventycles claymen to be exempt fro þis bonde of þe olde lawe \* in this poynte, þat in so many placis so opynly forfendiþ hem siche lordeschip; for þus it is writen: "*Dixit dominus ad aaron In terra eorum nichil possidebitis nec habebitis partem inter eos Ego pars et hereditas tua in medio filiorum israel. filiis autem leui dedi omnes decimas israel in possessionem pro ministerio quo seruiunt mihi in tabernaculo. Nichil aliud possidebunt decimarum oblatione contenti, quas in usus eorum et necessaria separavi*"—"þe lorde sayde to aaron, and in hym to alle þe tribe or kynred of leuy, of þe whiche kynred wer þe prestis & deeknys: ȝe schal haue no possesceyon in þe londe of þe childern of israelle. I am þine part & þine erytage in þe myddis of þe sonnys of israelle. And I have



þoue to the sonnys of leuy alle þe tiþis of \*israel in-to \*[p. 9 MS.]  
 possessioun, for þe seruyce þe whiche þai done to me in þe  
 tabernacle. þai schal haue noone oþer possessioun, þai schal  
 be payde wiþ offrynge and tiþis þe whiche I haue departid  
 in-to her vsis and nedis." Also in þe booke of Deutronomy Deut. xviii. [1.]  
 god saide thus: "*Non habebunt sacerdotes, et omnes qui de*  
*eadem tribu sunt, partem et hereditatem cum reliquo populo*  
*israelle; et sacrificia domini et oblaciones comedent, et nichil*  
*aliud accipient de possessione fratrum suorum*"—"þe prestis  
 and deeknys, and alle þo þat ben of þe same tribe, schal not  
 have part and heritage wiþ þat oþer peple of israel; for þai  
 schal ete þe sacrifyce and þe offryngis of þe lorde, and þai  
 schal taake no þinge ellis of þe possessioun of \*her breþern." \*[p. 20 MS.]  
 Also it is writen þus: "*Tribui autem leui non dedit posses-*  
*cionem: quoniam dominus deus israel ipse est possessio eorum,*  
*ut locutus est illi,*"—þat is, whan moyses assignyd þe  
 possessioun of þe londe of israel amonge þe peple, he ȝaue no  
 possessioun to þe tribe of leuy. For whi, þe lorde god of israel  
 is þe possessioun of þat tribe, as he haþ spoken to hym. Also  
 þes lawis, ȝouen of god by moyses, þe holy prophetis tauȝten.  
 As amonge oþer we may rede of Ezechiel, þat tauȝte how  
 þe prestis & deeknys schuld haue hem-sijlfe to godwarde in  
 lyuyng and sacrifice doyng; for he saiþ þus: "*Non est*  
*autem eis hereditas, ego autem hereditas eorum: et posses-*  
*cionem non dabit is in israel, ego enim \*possessio eorum.*" \*[p. 10 MS.]  
 "Forsoþe þer schal be noone heritage to hem; forsoþe I am þe  
 heritage of hem; and ȝe schal ȝeue no possessioun to hem in  
 israel, for I am þe possessioun of hem." And saynt Jerom  
 saiþ acordyng her-to: "*Clericus nichil preter dominum*  
*possidere debet, scilicet, non aurum, non argentum, nec*  
*possessiones; quia cum huiusmodi non vult dominus esse pars.*"  
 "A clerke schal haue no possession but god; þat is to say,  
 neþer gold, ne siluer, or possessions, for wiþ siche god wille  
 not be parte, þat han more þan is necessary to performe her  
 office wiþ. Of þis processe be-fore we may se how expresly  
 god forfendiþ lordeschip to his prestis in þe olde lawe; and

Priests under the old law could not \**p. 106 MS.* glose away their obligations as now they do.

Yet now priests should obey more perfectly since they have richer promises.

þai cowde not schake away þis bonde by a contrari glose, lijke \*as oure prestis kan now. And bi þe same bonde oure prestis ben bonden to kepe þes lawis, as tochyng þe auoydyng of worldly lordeschipis. And ouer þat þai ben bonden to þe same by a more perfyte lawe þan wer þe prestis of þe olde testament; þerfore þai schulde be þe more wiþdrawe fro secular lordeschip þan prestis of þe olde lawe; namely, siþ þe olde lawe byhotiþ for þe kepyng þerof prosperite of þis lyfe, and þe gospels bihotiþ þe kyngdome of heuen. And so no man may putte an oþer grounde bisyde þat þat is putte þe whiche is criste ihesu.

### Capitulum iij.

Ore ouer we may se how euen aȝens cristis wordis in M þe gospels prestis ben þus lordis, wher criste saiþ þus:

\**[p. 11 MS.]*  
Luke xxii. [25.]

"Reges gencium dominantur eorum, vos autem \*non sic"—

"þe kyngys of heþen han lordeschip on hem, but ȝe not so."

Christ has forbidden priestly lordship, both by word and example,

And also aȝens his ensauple þai ben lordis; for whan he was sowȝte to be made a kyng, & so to take in hym worldly lordeschip, he fledde in-to þe hille and prayde, in toknyng þat siche lordeschip was contrarie to þe state of þe clergi, þat schuld lyue in contemplacyon. But clerkis now lyuen not oonly contrariously to þis techyng and ensauple of criste, but also þai maken stronge lawis reuersyng boþe his wordis and dedis, and letten, in alle þat þai may, hem þat wolde teche þe troupe of criste. And, by þis lawe þat þai han made, sum of hem han saide þat þai schuld gete owte of þe secular hondis alle \*the temporal lordeschip þat þai may, and in no caase delyuer noone aȝen. And þerfore a gentilman axid a greete bischop of þis londe: "In caase þat þe clergi hadde alle þe temporal possescyons, as þai han now þe more parte, how schal þe secular lordis & knyghtis lyue, & wher-wiþ? siþ god haþ in boþe his lawis allowid her staate and her lijfode." And þen he awnswerid & sayde þat "þai schuld be clerkis soudyours, and lyue by her wagis." And certis

but the clergy not only disobey him, but make laws reversing his commands,

\**[p. 116 MS.]*  
by which they aim at getting all property into their hands.

Avowal of a bishop.

his lawe of getyng in of þes temporaltes and þes oþer wordis of þis bischop ouȝte to be taken hede to. For siþ þai han now þe more part of þe temporal lordeschipe, and wiþ þat þe spiritualtes and þe greete \*mouable tresouris of þe rewme, þai may lightly make a conquest up-on þat othir party; namely, siþ þe temporal lordis ben not in noumbre and in ryches lyke as þai wer sum tyme; for þai ben sotilly spolid of her lordeschipis, in distroyng of her staate and power þat god sett hem in, and þe party of þe clergy in alle þes poyntis ben encreasyd, and so couetously þai ben sette up-on þes goodis þat þai welden now, & mo þat þai hopen to haue, þat þai will not suffre her couetise to be enpugnyd openly ne priuely, als ferr as þai may lett it. For þe gospel of Jon saiþ þat bischopis and pharises sayden of criste: "If we leuen hym þus alle men schul byleue in hym, \*and romayns schulen comme & take oure place and oure folke." For þai dredden hem of criste, ȝif his wordis wenten forþe, þat romayns schulden come and fordo prestis and phariseis. As if bischoppis and abbotis spaken to-day to-gedre: "hyde we goddis lawe, lest þes seculer lordis come and take oure lordeschippis and fordo oure statis." "And fro þat day," þe gospel saiþ, "þai þouȝten to sle criste." So now by more malyce þai killen hem þat techen þe troupe of cristis gospels. and in þat þai suffre not criste to be alyue in þe sowlis of his peple bi qwike faythe, whiche commiþ by knoueleche of his lawe, þat þai so cruely hyden fro þe peple; & þis is more cruel killynge of criste þan to kille hym bodely in his owne persone, \*for þer-of came þe mooste goode to mankynde, þat is, saluacion of þo þat ben chosen to blisse. But of þat oþer maner of killynge of criste by hidyng of his lawe may no goode come; for it is aȝens þe plesance of criste, & mooste lykyng to þe fende and lesyng of soulis. And þerfore saynt poule saiþ: "Si opertum est euaungelium nostrum: hiis qui perirent est opertum: in quibus deus huius seculi excecavit mentes infidelium" (2 cor. 4)—"ȝif þe gospel is hid, it is hid to hem

These things should be looked after.

[p. 12 MS.]

The temporal lords are fewer and poorer than they were;

the clergy increased,

and intolerant of reproof.

John xi. [47.]

[p. 125 MS.]

The Pharisees sought to kill Christ, because they feared the Romans might come and overthrow them. So the bishops, fearing for their lordships, slay them that teach the truth of Christ's gospel.

So the people cannot have the knowledge of which faith comes.

[p. 13 MS.]

[2 Cor. iv. 3.]

þat perschen, in þe whiche god of þis worlde haþ blyndid þe mynde of unfeifful men." And þus whoso biþenkiþ hym

Our bishops and religious show the same kind of malice as did \* [p. 138 MS.] bishops and scribes in Christ's time.

what maner malyce was practisid aȝens criste by bischopis and scribis and religious in tyme of his bodily presence here, þe same malice in kynde \* he schal fynde, þe uphepid, in oure byschopis and religious. And as þe peple of israel wern werste gouernyd undir her prestis, whan þe gouernance was

The worst government of the Jews was under the priests.

commen holy in-to her hondis, and undir þat gouernance come in her mooste confusion & losten þe holy londe for euer; so ben now cristen rewmys foule confoundid by worldly gouernance and lordeschip þat prestis han take

So the secular power of priests brings confusion into Christian realms.

up-on hem. And alwey as þai getyn more & more of þis, so to more confusion drawen cristen rewmys. And for crist wolde not þat prestis schulde haue syche worldly gouernance, he saiþ to alle men: "Reddite que sunt cesaris cesari, & que sunt dei deo"—"þeldiþ to cesar þo þingis þat ben of cesar, and to god þo \* þingis þat ben of god"; confermyng to þe secular party of the chirche þe material swerde wiþ his purtenance in þe persone of cesar, in whom þat tyme was cheffy þis swerde, wiþ alle þe temporaltes þat longen þerto.

Luke xx. [25.]

\* [p. 14 MS.]

Cesar should have what is Cesar's; the temporal sword; and this includes all secular lordship.

And certis I drede not but þat þe secular party of þe chirche, & namely þe lordis, han als myche or more coloure of þe firste party of þis texte to chalenge oonly to hem þe temporal swerde, wiþ his purtenances þat longeþ þerto, as secular lordeschipis wiþ secular iugement & secular offyce, as oure prestis han euydence of þe secunde party of þis tixte to chalenge þe tiþis of þe peple, as þingis oonly longynge to hem. And if þai wer indifferent, as þai demen þat it is

If priests were impartial, they would allow this. \* [p. 148 MS.]

wronge and \* dampnable a secular man to take up-on hym a prestis office, in prechyng or minystryng of sacramentis, and in disposyng of tiþis, þat weren lymtyed to þe state of þe clergy, so þai schulden deme it fulls dampnable a prest to oupie þe temporal swerde, wiþ þe purtenance þat longiþ þer-to specified to-fore. And in full witnes þat þis lordeschip is dampnable in þe state of presthode, crist, in whom is full ensauple and lore of perfeccyon of presthode, fled alle þes

Christ's example. He fled from being made a king,

þingis; for he auoidid þis swerde in seculer office, and tauȝte his apostles, and in hem alle *oþer* prestis, to do þe same whan he fled fro þe peple þat wolde han sett hym in þe office of a kyng. And whan he was requirid to ȝeue iugement bitwene two breþern \*stryuyng for heritage, he wolde not \*[p. 15 MS.] ȝeue þat seculer iugement, but saide: "Homo, quis me Luc. xii. [14.] and refused to act as a judge. constituit iudicem aut diuisorem super vos?"—"Man, who made me a iuge or a departer up-on þou?" And so he auoidid þis swerde, and left it to þe temporal party of his chirche wiþ all þe purtenances. And þis same lesson tauȝte þe apostle: for saynt poule assigneþ þis swerde to þe seculer lordis, as it is saide bifore, and techiþ men to pray firste for suche men; þat þe peple mai lede a pesable lyfe undir hem. The apostles teach obedience to the secular powers. [1] Tim. ii. [2.]

And he techiþ cristen men to obey to hem whedir þai ben cristen or heþen; ȝe, all-þou; þai ben tirawntes. And saynt petir techiþ þe same lesson, and biddid þe peple to obey to þe kyng, as to hym þat is passyng *\*oþer*, & to duyks as to þo Eph. vi. [5.] Titus iii. [1.] 1 Peter ii. [13.] þat ben sent of þe kyng, in-to þe vengeance of schrewis & preysyng of goode men. And as touchyng þis seculer lordeschip, saynt petir techiþ how þer schulde be no lordis in þe clergy; and þis worde most nedis be vndirstonden of seculer lordeschip, þe which cristen his maistir bifore forfendid to alle his clergi. Siþ þan þat þis lordeschip of þe clerkis is so openli aȝens þe wille of god, schewid in boþe his lawis, and so þai offenden god deedly, & euer schulen while it duriþ in hem, it wer tyme þat cristen chirche toke hede to cristen wordis, þe whiche he spak to petir figuryng þis chirche, and saide: "turne þe swerde in-to his place"; as þou; crist \*wolde say þus: "þou It is time that the Church took heed to Christ's words, [p. 16 MS.] my chirche, figurid bi petir, se how þe material swerde wiþ his purtenances is owte of his place; þerfor do as I commaundid þe, and turne þis swerde in-to his place wiþ his purtenances, as secular lordeschipis, seculer office & seculer iugement, in-to þe seculer arme of my chirche, as I haue ordeyned." And certis, but if þe chirche here effectualy þis worde of cristen, schal it neuer stonde in redy rule, ne aftir þe plesance of god; and þerfore lordis schulden take hede fulls tendirly to

or it will never be in accordance with God's will. Lords must listen to this voice of Christ, lest they be guilty of consent to sin.

his voyce of criste þat saiþ: "turne þis swerde aȝeyne in-to his place;" for whi þis apostasie of þe clergie will not oonly be cause of dampnacion of hem sijlfe, but also of alle \*þo þat mai amende þis & done not. For saynt poule saiþ he is not oonly worþi deþ þat doþe yuel þingis, but also he þat consentiþ to þe doer. Forsoþe alle þo consenten þat done not her power to amende syche defawtis. And þerfore no man may putt an oþer grounde bisidis þat þat is putt, þe whiche is criste ihesu.

### Capitulum iiiij.

Apology for in-  
sistence.

\*[p. 17 MS.]

Danger of delay.

Extent of evil,

\*[p. 17b MS.]

which increases  
daily.

If once the clergy  
get full power,  
they will not part  
with it again;

Eþelesse of o þinge I pray ȝou here, þat ȝe greue ȝou not, n all-þou; I forȝete not lightly þe materials swerde wiþ his purtenances, and þat I desire hertly þat it wer turnyd aȝen in-to his kyndely place, wher god hym sijlf had putt it. For whan crist was in þe hondis of his enmyes, wher co\*munly men forȝeten hem sijlfe & all þat þai han to do, ȝit he byþouȝte hym on þis swerde, and saide to petir, & in hym to all his clergie: "turne þe swerde in-to his place." And it wer nede þat cristis chirche toke tente to þis word by-tymys; for þis swerde wiþ his purtenance may be drawe so fer owte of his place þat it will be vnpossible to brynge it aȝen. For þus it stondiþ of þis swerde in fulls many londis, wher clerkis han fully þe secular lordeschipis in her power; & it is ful like for to stonde in þe same wise wiþ-in a few ȝeris in ynglonde, but if þe knyȝthode of þis rewme sett þe sonner honde upon þis swerde to brynge it in-to his kyndely place. For well myȝte we se\*uer þat slepe of litergi þat is fallen up-on vs, þat þe clergi haþ fro day to day more & more honde vp-on þis swerde wiþ his purtenance. And so þai ben likly durynge þis slepe in þe secular partye to pull þis swerde owte of þe secular honde sodenly, and so to haue fulls power þerof, as clerkis in oþer diuers londis han. And wete lordis well þat, if þe clergi gete þis swerde oony fully in her power, þe secular party may go pipe wiþ an yuy lefe for eny lordeschipis þat þe clerkis wills ȝeue hem aȝen; for it wer aȝens þe lawe þat þai

han made as touchynge sicke lordeschipis; bi þe whiche lawe <sup>for they have laws forbidding them to part with property;</sup> þai ben bonden to gete in-to þe clergie als myche of þe possessions as þai may, and in no caas to ȝeue eny sicke

\*lordeschipis aȝen in-to þe seculer honde. And þis lawe, as <sup>[p. 18 MS.]</sup>

experience techiþ vs, is streytly ynouȝ kepte amonge hem. <sup>and they keep their laws strictly.</sup> For alle day it is seen þat seculer men ȝeuen her temporall

possessions to þe clergi; but cowde I neuer seen ne here þat eny sicke lordeschipis wern ȝeuen aȝen to þe seculer party.

Neþeles I wote welles þat þe clergi will sai here, þat all her <sup>They allege the rights of the Church.</sup> bissynes þat þai han in þis worlde a-bowte sicke lordeschepe,

as in stryuyng, pletyng, chydynge, and fītyng, is for the ryȝte of holy chirehe. But certis it is merueyl how & by

whos autorite þis ryȝte cam a place. For welles I wote þat god is full lord of alle þis worlde aboue and also of the erthe

bineþe, as þe prophete dauid saiþ: "*Domini est terra & plenitudo eius*"—"þe erþe and þe plente þerof is þe lordis." <sup>[Psalm xxiv. 1.]</sup> \*<sup>[p. 186 MS.]</sup>

And welles I wote þat þer is no lord here of þe erþe, but if he hold of hym as chefe lord, & haue his lordeschip & hold it by autorite of þis lord god. And wel I wote forþermore

þat þis chefe lord haþ ȝeue a decre vp-on his clergi, boþe in <sup>But all property is held under God as chief lord, who has forbidden them to hold property.</sup> þe olde lawe & in þe newe, þe whiche may not be reuokid

riȝtfully; þat none of þe clergye, þe whiche is ybonden by his astate & office to sue criste in þe perfeccion of þe gospelle,

schulde eny sicke lord be; as it is schewid openli before by autorite of boþe þe lawis and by þe lijfe of criste and his

apostles. And perfore þe holy doctoure origene writiþ þus of <sup>Origen. s. gen. hom. xvi.</sup> goode prestis & yuelle: "wolt þu wite what difference is bitwix

þe prestis \*of god & þe prestis of pharao? pharao grawntiþ <sup>[p. 19 MS.]</sup>

londis to his prestis; forsoþe god grauntiþ none partye in þe erþe to his prestis, but saiþ, 'I am ȝoure parte.' perfore alle

ȝe prestis of þe lord þat reden þes þingis, take hede & se what is þe difference of prestis; lest þai þat han parte in þe

erþe & taken tente to bissinessis and tilþis of þe erþe be not seyn to be prestis of þe lord but of pharao; for he wille þat

his prestis haue possessions, & hawnte þe tylyng of þe felde & not of þe soule; he wol þat þai ȝeue bissynes to þe londe,

- [Luke xiv. 33.] & not to þe lawe. But what criste commaundiþ, here ȝe: 'He þat forsakiþ not alle þingis þat he haþ in possession may not be my disciple.' Crist denyeth him to be his disciple þat haþ
- \*[p. 196 MS.] \*any þinge in possess[i]on, and him þat forsakiþ not alle þingis þat he haþ; & what do we? how rede we þes þingis oure sijlfe, oþer how expowne we þes þingis to þe peple? þe whiche renounce not þes þingis þat we han, but we willen gete to vs þo þinges þat we hadden neuer bifore we cam to criste. That is to forsake pouert and bodely trauelle for to haue riches and ese. But certis þis is contrarie to þe apostles lijfe, as saynt
- Matt. xix. [27.] petir witnessiþ, saynge to criste: what schal be to vs þat han forsaken alle þingis & swen þe? so petir axed not lordeschip & ese of þis lijfe to rewarde for his seruyce." And þerfor þe
- \*[p. 20 MS.] holy doctoure Odo in a sermon saiþ, þat bigynneþ þus, \*Ecce, Odo in sermone  
Ecce nos reliqui-  
mus omnia.
- nos reliquimus omnia: "Abel is dede; þe bissynes of schipard and spiritual mornynge or weylng is alayne; but cayme, þat is possession, is kept, ȝee and caym þe erþe-tyllers, is made þe hirde or gouernor<sup>1</sup> of sowlis. For it is not axyd in þe chirche if he kan welle teche, or if he kan wepe & weyle for synys, but ȝef he be caym, þat is an erþe-tyllyer þat kan welle till þe londe. And it is no wondir þou; possession ale ful many, siþ it is venym. For þe same day þat the chirche was endowid bi constantyne, þer was herde a voyce in þe eyre: 'to-day is venym sched in-to þe chirche.' for the chirche was made more in dignite but lesse in religion. And if it be axid of sicke oone: \* 'where is þe schepe þat was bytaken to þe?' he awnseriþ 'wheþer I am kepar of my broþer?' as þou; he sayde, 'what charge is to me of þe sowlis, so þat I haue welle ordenyd for þe temporalle goodia.' Syche ben acursid, as cayme was, þat led owte þe schepe abel & brynge hym not aȝen, but disseyuen hym; of whiche god saiþ by þe prophete Ezechiel, her schipardis han disseyuyd hem." Alle þis saiþ þe goode doctour Odo. To sicke holy sentence of scripture & doctouris schulden lordis take hede; for saynt ȝysdre saiþ,
- [Isidore.]

<sup>1</sup> gouer MS.



and it is putt in þe lawe: "Seculer lordis, pryncis of þe <sup>Ysydori senten-</sup>worlde, schulden well wite & knowe þat þai schal zelde herd <sup>ciarum l. iii. c.</sup> rekenynge & acowntis to god for \*holy chirche, þat þai han <sup>xxi.</sup> take of criste to kepe & to defende. For as saiþ the law; <sup>\*[p. 21 MS.]</sup> þer wheþer so euer þat seculer lordis rule holy chiroche wel or yuelle, criste schal ax reknyng of hem. For undir seculer lordis power crist haþ sett þe rulyng and gouernynge of his chirche." And þerfore saynt Austyn, in þe boke of questyons <sup>Austin.</sup> of þe olde lawe and þe newe, & in oþer dyuers placis, saiþ þat kyngis and lordis ben vicaris of þe godhede. And saynte poule saiþ: "Not wiþ-out cause knyztis beren swerde, but <sup>Rom. xiii. [4.]</sup> to avenge þe wraþe of god in-to hym þat mysdoþe, & to supporte & mayntene hem þat done wel." <sup>1</sup> And for worþines of þis astate saynt poule techiþ to pray first of alle for kyngis <sup>[1] Tim. ii. [2.]</sup> & knyztis, þat god ȝeue hem grace to gouern \*hem selfe & <sup>\*[p. 21b MS.]</sup> her peple, þat þai han in gouernance to þe plesance of god & to helþe of her owne sowlis. And herfor saynt petir biddiþ <sup>[1] Peter ii. [17.]</sup> þe peple to obey to kyngis, as to hem þat ben passynge oþer, & to dukys as to þo þat ben <sup>2</sup> sent of kyngis in-to þe vengeance of mysdoers & to þe praysynge of goode men. And not-wiþstondynge alle þes autorites, þat ben rehersed afore aȝen þe lordeschipis þat þe clerkis occupien expresly aȝens goddis lawe, as it schal be pleyndly proued her-aftir wiþ goddis help, ȝit þai sayen þat criste forfendiþ hem not sicke worldly lordeschip, saaf þat þai schuld not be lordis aftir þe pompe & <sup>Priests say that they are forbid-</sup>pride of þis worlde. But þis fleschly glose & many sicke <sup>den only pomp and pride.</sup> oþer þat þai han is no þinge to pur\*pose. For god haþ <sup>\*[p. 22 MS.]</sup> forfendit pompe and pride to all maner of men, and mysuse of his goodis; for he ȝaue neuer man leue to do synne. But <sup>These are forbid-</sup>vp hap þu art a clerke or a religious man endowid wiþ many <sup>den to all men.</sup> worldly lordeschipis, and art wo þat euer crist was so yuel <sup>Rich priests may think Christ ill advised to speak thus,</sup> avised to say, or þe euangelist to write, þes wordis; þe kyngis of heþen han lordeschip upon hem, but ȝe not so; and woldist listly, and it wer in þine power, do þis worde & sicke

<sup>1</sup> yuel MS. (This clause is not in the passage referred to.) <sup>2</sup> bent MS.

oper owte of þe gospels for euer; as waiwerd clerkis wolden in seynt Austyns time haue done owte, & þai wisten how, þis  
 Matt. xxiii. [2.] worde of þe gospels: "super cathedram moyses sederunt &c."  
 "Vpon moyses chayer han siten scribis & pharyseis: alle þat  
 \* [p. 226 MS.] þai schal say to \* þou kepe & do þe, but do þe not aftir her  
 Austyn. werkis." þus saiþ Austyn, de uerbis domini, super isto textu.  
 And for als myche as þu maist not undo for euer suche textis,  
 ne þit þu wilt do aftir þe letter of sicke textis; þerfore þu  
 and want a glose. saist þu most haue a glose. wel þan for goddis loue, If þu  
 wilt glose þe textis of þe gospels þat ben so euen aȝens þi  
 lordeschip, glose hem as criste did and commaundid þe to  
 John x. [38], xiv. þeue fulls credence to his glose, whan he saide: "ȝif þe leue not  
 [11.] me for my wordis, leue þe þe dedis." And if þu bileue  
 They should take Christ's glose, that is, his deeds. effectualy þis glose, þu schalt not oonly forsake þe lordeschip  
 þat þu occupiest, but also, raþer þan þu schuldist be occupied  
 þerwiþ, þu schalt renne awai þerfro & hyde þe, as cristis  
 John vi. [15.] glose saiþ þat he did. and if þu wilt not bileue ef\*fectualy  
 \* [p. 23 MS.] cristis wordis neþer his glose, þan þu wilfully & obetynatly  
 Or, forsaking Christ, they will become members of Antichrist. forsakist crist vtirly; and so þu bycummyst a lymme of  
 anticriste, for no man may putt an oper grounde bysidis þat  
 þat is put, þe whiche is criste ihesu.

### Capitulum v.

Ere we may se þat a clerk may not be a lorde, or vir-  
 h tuosly occupi so secular lordeschip. And ȝif þu wilt wete  
 whi, me semip þat þis is a cause sufficient y-nowe. þat  
 criste haþ forbodun hem þis lordeschip in playne wordis, as  
 it is writen ofte to-fore, & glosid þe wordis wiþ his dedis;  
 for whan he was souȝte to his passion, he profred hym silfe,  
 but whan he was souȝte to be a kyng & to haue taake up-on  
 hym þe material swerde wiþ his purtenances, he fled and  
 Christ offered himself to his passion, but withdrew from kingship.  
 \* [p. 236 MS.] \*hidde hym self and left þis swerde hooly in his place;  
 techynge his prestis by þis ensample to do þe same. And it  
 is no doute but þat þis ensample was a commaundement to

cristis prestis to fle vtirli þis lordeschip. For as seynt gregory saiþ: "*Dominus ihesus cristus aliud nos sermonibus, aliud vero operibus ammonet. Ipsa enim facta eius precepta sunt, quia dum aliud tacitus facit, quid agere debeamus innotescit.*" Cristis dedis or ensaumples ben commaunde-  
Gregorius omelia xvii.  
 mentis what we schulden do. And þat criste fled þis temptation of þe peple & hidde hymself schuld teche prestis to fle, not oonly þis synfull & dampnable lordeschip in þe state of presthode, but also þat<sup>1</sup> þai fle þe occasion or the temptaci[on] \*þer-of. And þis ensaumpled criste in his  
His example is a command.  
 fleyng and hydyng. And not oonly þis, but also crist in his doynge dampnyd symony, þe whiche is takynge, or  
Christ in his deeds condemned symony.  
 an unruely will to take or to ȝeue, worldly goode for grace, or bi occasion of grace of god mynystred to eny creature. For whan criste had graciously & by myracle fed þe peple, þorow occasion of þat grace, þis peple was moued to take hym & make hym a lorde; but criste, a clere ensaumples of clenness of prestis, by whom as goddis instrumentis grace is ȝouen to þe peple as þis grace was by þe preste criste, fled þis ȝifte. And in þis fleyng of criste fro þis lordeschip aftir þe myracle & grace þat god þe fadir had ministrid by hym, he dampned \*þe ressauyng of þe lordeschip þe whiche  
\*[p. 24 MS.]  
 siluestre toke of constantyne. And criste commendid & confermyd þe dede of þe blessid prophete helyȝe, þat refusid  
Elisha's example.  
 þe ȝiftis proferid to hym of Naaman aftir þe miracle & grace  
4 Kings v. [16.]  
 þat god had done by hym to Naaman. Neþelesse for þe more open knowleche of þat þat I moue here, þu schalt undirstonde þat þe casis þat bitydden bytwene constantyne & siluestre & naaman & heliȝe ben wondir like; for boþe þes seculer  
Comparison between Elisha and Silvester.  
 men wer grete lordis & mesels, and boþe weren helid bi myracle of god, & bi grace mynystred to hem bi þes two prestis. For Naaman was helid of god bi grace ministred to  
4 Kings v.  
 hym bi heliȝe. And constantyne was he[lid] \*of god by grace  
\*[p. 25 MS.]  
 ministred to hym bi siluestre, as his storie telliþ. and boþ

<sup>1</sup> MS. inserts 'but.'

þai wer helid in oon wise, for in water schewid of god to þes two prestis, and bi þes two prestis schewid to þes<sup>1</sup> two sike men. And aftir þes gracis þus minystred by þes two prestis, Naaman proferid to heliþe wondir grete ȝiftis of mouable goodis, and constantyne proferid to siluestre boþe mouable & vn mouable goodis in wondir grete plente and excesse.

Contrast—  
Elisha would not  
take gifta.

Silvester took  
what the emperor  
offered.  
\*[p. 256 MS.]

[Gehazi.]

\*[p. 26 MS.]

Silvester offended  
against a more  
perfect law.

But not-wiþstondyng þat naaman prayed fulls hertly heliþe, & enforsid hym þat he schuld haue take þo ȝiftis, vttyrly he forsoke hem; but siluestre in þe same case toke þat þe emperoure proferid hym, boþe þe grete worldly \*aray & þe wondir grete lordeschipis. And oo grete cause whi heliþe wold not assent to Naaman to take eny ȝiftis of hym in þis case was for þan heliþe had been a symonient, siþ his man giezi, þat ran aftir naaman and toke ȝiftis of hym þorow occasion of þat grace so minystred, was a symonyent, not-wiþstondyng þat þat grace was not ȝeue by hym in eny wise to Naaman, but þat he toke þo ȝiftis bi occasion of þat grace. how myche rapþer his maister heliþe, þat had more kunnyng & was bounden to more perfeccion, schuld haue be a symonyent ȝif he had ressauyd þat goode, siþ þat grace was ministred to Naaman by hym. And no dowte þou; siluestre had in þis case ressauyd but mouable goodis, he \*schulde haue synned more greuously þan giezi did, or heliþe schulde ȝif he had ressauyd þat naaman proferid to hym; for siluestir trespassid aȝens a more perfite lawe. And what bi giezi & balam, what by Judas & symon magus, þat wer symonyentis acursid of god & ysmyten wiþ goddis vengeance, & what bi many faire eydencis of scripture & reson þat siþe a man owȝt to haue had, he had many grete warnyngis of hydousnes & perille of þis synne ouer þat his predecessouris hadden; and alle þis agregeden hys syn. Here it may be knowen þat siluestre did not aftir þe ensaumple of criste, þat fled whan he schuld haue be made a kynge & hidde hym self and so wiþstode it, but he proferid hymself to his

<sup>1</sup> to þes to þe MS.

passion. But \*siluestir did on þe contrari wise; for whan <sup>\*[p. 263 MS.]</sup> he was sowȝte to passion, he hidde hym sijlfe, as þe storie of <sup>John xviii. [4.]</sup> <sup>Silvester reversed</sup> <sup>Christ's example.</sup> hym telliþ. And whan he was callid to þe state of þe emperoure or worldly dignite, he in a maner proferid hym self; in als myche as he manly wiþstode not þe hidous & synfulle purpose of þe emperoure, but cowardly consentid to his foly. And certis I drede not þat he had neuer better cause of martirdome þan to haue wiþstonde <sup>He should have withstood the Emperor's will.</sup> þis foli of þe emperour, in case þat he wolde by violence haue enforaid hym to þis lordeschip. For as a man may conceyue, in partye of þat þat is saide before, & of euydence þat wiþ goddis help schal sue her-after, þis wickid dede was peruertynge of cristis ordenances in \*his <sup>\*[p. 27 MS.]</sup> chirche, & harmfull & destruction to euery state þerof, & will be fynal confusion þerof but ȝif it be remedied. And so þis man had neuer so grete cause to fle & to hide hym self as whan he was callid to þis rialte; and þat he myȝte haue lernyd of criste, þat schulde haue be his maister, þat in þe same case fled & hidde hymself. And þouȝ vnkunnynghes myȝte sumdele excuse þe emperour; ȝit þat <sup>He had not the Emperor's excuse of ignorance.</sup> myȝt not excuse þis preste, þat owȝte to knowe, as a þinge chefly bilongyng to his perfeccion, þat he schulde not be a lorde on þat wise. For no man may putt an opir grounde biside þat [þat] is putt whiche is criste ihesu.

### Capitulum vj.

Nd so who so lokip wel þe dede of siluestir, it was \*ex- <sup>\*[p. 275 MS.]</sup> a preȝly aȝens þe lyuynge & þe techynge of ihesu criste, as it is openli tawȝt bifore. And siþ þe endowynge of þe clergi <sup>Endowment of the clergy is grounded on the donation of Constantine.</sup> is groundid vp-on þis dede, we may se by þis processe how þe clergi is wondirfull enfect wiþ symonye & heresie. For þis sinne in hem may not be vndo till þe temporalle lordeschip in hem be distried, whiche haþ envenemyd alle þe clergi. & ȝif we taake hede to þis processe, we schal not myche wondir, all-

Gorra.

\*[p. 28 MS.]

[Jerome.]

4 Kings iv. [8.]

\*[p. 285 MS.]

Christ lived on offerings,

as did all the apostles,  
Luke viii. [3.]

\*[p. 29 MS.]

We must praise  
Christ and Eliabaand condemn  
Gehazi and Silvester.This is not  
blaspheming  
Silvester.

þou; þe awngelle of god, aperyng in þe eyre in þe tyme of doynge of þis wickid dede, saide þes wordis: "þis day is venym sched or helt in þe chirche of god;" as gorram saiþ upon þe xij chapitre of þe apocalips. And þerfor saiþ \*saynt Jerom, in vitis patrum: "Siþ þe chirche encresid in possesyouns, it haþ decresid in vertues." And herfore criste þat was in lyke case wiþ þes two prestis, heliþe & siluestre, in dampnyng of þis wickid dede þat haþ so myche harmyd & envenymyd his chirche, left þe way of siluestre, þat toke þis worldly lordeschip, and chese þe way of heliþe þe prophete, þat forsake þe giftis þat naaman proferid hym, and fled boþ symony & heresy. And so, as heliþe left þe grete richesse þat naaman wold haue ȝyue hym & tooke worþili þe pore ordenance & fyndyng þat a goode man & his wyfe proferid to hym; þat is to say, a lytill soler, a bedde, a borde, a chaire, & a kandilstek, þe whiche \*ben acordyng to a studier or a contemplatyfe man; So criste forsake secular lordeschip, & held hym payde wiþ þe pore lifode þat deuoute peple ministred to hym to his nedeful sustenance in his labours. And þus didden also alle þe apostles, as a man may conceyue of þe gospels & in many oþer placis of her lijfis. For aftir tyme þat god þe fadir had wrouȝte þis grete miracle bi criste his preste, in releuyng of fyve þousande & mo þat wern in mysese of hunger, he avoydid sicke worldly rewarde þat schulde haue be ȝoue to hym by occasion of minystryng of þis grace. Siþ þan þat criste & heliþe acorden to-gydre in þis case, & siluestre reuersiþ hem boþe here; \*and sicke contrarius dedis in casis þat ben so lijke mow not be glosid to-gedre, þan we most nedis, ȝif we will go a sure way, magnifie in worde & dede þe doynge of heliþe & of criste in þis case; siþ þat heliþes dede is commendid in scripture, and crist is truþe and autor of scripture. þan we moten dampne þe doynge of gyezi & of siluestre, þus ferr straying away fro heliþe & criste & his gospels. And in þis writyng I blasfeme no more siluestre, & þes holy men and sayntis þat han ben siþ þis endowyng

of þe chirche cam in, all-þou; [I] rehers & blame her synne,  
þan I do petir & his felowis whan I say þat þai synfully  
forsoken criste, or poule whan \*i say þat he wickidly \*[p. 296 MS.]  
pursuyd cristis chirche. for I blame of no þinge wher-of þai  
schuld be sayntis, no more þan I do þes apostles; alle-þou; I  
blame her synns, þe whiche þai hem self dampnyd, & wer  
sori þat euer þai synned so. For petir wept sore for his Matt. xxvi. [75.]  
synne, as þe gospelle saiþ. and saynt poule, mekely knowlech-  
unge his synne, saide þat he was not worþi to be callid [1] Cor. xv. [9.]  
apostle of criste, and þat bi-cause þat he pursuyd cristis  
chirche. And on þe same wise siluestre and þes sayntis  
diden, or ellis schuld haue do for her synne. For whan we Saints to be  
praised so far as  
they followed  
Christ.  
Matt. xi.  
will preyse sayntis, we schul loke wherin þai suyd criste and  
his lawe in worde, dede, or maners, and so ferr þai ben worþi  
preysynge \*and no ferþer; for crist is þe mesure of vertuous \*[p. 30 MS.]  
lyuynge & worchyng; and herfore he calliþ alle men to sue Matt. xxviii. [20.]  
hym & to lerne of hym, & namely preſtis to teche þat þat he  
tawȝte, and þan we may not erre. And herfore saynt poule Eph. v. [1.]  
[should be] Cor.  
xi. 1.]  
tauȝte cristen peple to sue hym, but no ferrer þan he sueþ  
ihesu criste. And saynt petir remittiþ þe pepille to criste, for  
to take of hym ensauple; saiynge þus: "Crist haþ suffred for  
vs, leuynge þou ensauple þat þe flow þe steppis of hym þat  
did no synne, neþir was eny gyle founden in his mouþe."  
And so a man may euer saafly sue his lyuynge and techynge  
wiþ-owte eny errynge; but & we sue in alle þingis eiþer If we follow any  
saint in all things  
\*[p. 306 MS.]  
we must often  
err, as they did.  
petir, poule, or siluestre, or eny \*oþer synfulle man, we must  
nedis erre in many þingis, as þai diden. Loke þan if siluestre  
suyd criste whan he forsoke þe pouert of þe gospelle & by-cam  
a lorde vpon þe west empire of þe worlde. And if he so  
did, þan preyse hym in þat doynge, & ellis not. for whi no  
man may putt an oþer grounde bisidis þat þat is putt, þe  
whiche is criste ihesu.

## Capitulum vij.

I þis processe bifore saide men mow lerne to awnswere  
 b to þe comon argumentis þat couetous clerkis maken in þis  
 mater to mayntene wiþ her synne. In þe whiche argumen-  
 tis þai aleggen for hem þe sinnes of her *predecessoris*, saynge  
 \*p. 31 MS.] þus, "seynt hue, seynt thomas and seynt swyþune \*wer þus  
 lordis, & þai wer holy men here & now ben seyntis in heuen;  
 Covetous clerks allege the ex-  
 ample of saints; þan may we, be þe same skile, medefulli taake up-on vs þis  
 temporall lordeschip, and sue hem in þis." But ȝe schal  
 undirstonde þat þis maner of arguynge holdiþ wellȝ whan we  
 argue of god; for it suyþ well, "criste did þus, saide þus, or  
 wolde þus, þerfor þis was wel done, saide, or willid; & so in  
 þis dede, worde, or wille, it is holsum, spedy & plesaunt to  
 god þat we sue hym." But whan we argue of an *creature*  
 þis argument is to schorte; for it sueþ not, "Petir saide þus or  
 did þus, þerfore he did or saide wellȝ, and in þes wordis &  
 dedis it is holsum to sue hym;" for þis maner \*of arguynge is  
 vnpreuyd in þat þat petir forsok cristē, & in þat þat he  
 smote of malcus ere; so þat þis maner of arguynge of a  
 creature is to schorte. And þerfor ȝe most argue þus: "Petir  
 saide or did þus, and in þis saiynge or doynge he suyd þe life  
 & þe lore of ihesu cristē; þerfor petir in þis did or sayde wellȝ,  
 and in þis it is holsum to sue petir." And so musten oure  
 clerkis argue whan þai aleggen for her lordeschip þe lyuynge  
 of her patrons & sayntis, & sayen þus: "Seynt thomas &  
 seynt hwe & seynt Swyþune wer þus lordis, & in þis þai suyd  
 cristis lyuynge & his lore; þerfor we may lefulli be þus  
 lordis." And I wote wel þat gabriel schal blow his horne or  
 þai han preuyd þe mynor; \*þat is, þat þes seyntes or patrons  
 in þis suyden þe lore or þe life of ihesu cristē. And of þis ȝe  
 may se þat siche nakid argumentis, þat ben not clopid wiþ  
 cristis lyuynge or his techynge, ben riȝt nouȝt worþe, alle þouȝ  
 þe clerkis abynden wiþ hem myche folke in þis worlde. But  
 here haue I no leyser to telle, all ȝif I kouȝde, what chefesaunce

but it is never  
 safe to follow in  
 all things any  
 creature.

They should  
 prove that the  
 saints followed  
 Christ in this.

Gabriel will blow  
 his horn before  
 they prove this.  
 \*p. 32 MS.]



and costis þe clergi makiþ, & what werris þai holden to con-  
 tynu þis symony & heresi so vnausely brouȝte in-to þe  
 chirche. And ȝit þai sechen alle þe ways þerto þat þai kan,  
 ȝhe in so myche þat [þai] gone openli armyd into þe felde to  
 kill cristen men for to gete and holde sicke lordeschipe. And  
 not-wiþstondynge þat seynt petir was so pore þat he had  
 neþer golde \* ne siluer, as he saiþ in þe dedis of þe apostles.  
 And his oþer worldly goode he lefte whan he began to sue  
 criste. And as tochyng þe tytle of worldly lawe þat he had  
 to þat goode, he made neuer clayme, ne neuer resseyued aftir  
 worldly lordeschip. And ȝit þai callen alle her hoole lorde-  
 schip seynt petirs grounde or lordeschip. And þerfore saynt  
 bernerd writiþ to ewgeny þe pope, saynge þus: “ȝif þu wilt  
 be a lorde, sike it by an oþer title but not by þe apostles  
 ryȝte, for he myȝt not ȝeue þe þat he hadde not: þat he hadde  
 he ȝaue, þe whiche was bissynes vp-on chirchis; wheþir he  
 ȝaue lordeschip, here what he saiþ: ‘Be ye not lordis in þe  
 clergi, but be ȝe made fourme & ensauple of cristis \*flokke.’  
 And lest þu trow þis to be sayde not of trowþe, take kepe  
 what crist saiþ in þe gospels: ‘þe kyngis of heþen han lorde-  
 schip vp-on hem, forsoþe ȝe not so.’ Se how pleylnly lordeschip  
 is forbodyn to alle apostles; for ȝif þu be a lorde, how darst  
 þu take vp-on þe apostilhede? or if þu be a bischop, how darst  
 þu take vp-on þe lordeschip? playnly þu art forbodyn boþe;  
 and ȝif þu wilt haue boþe to-gydir, þu schalt lose boþe, and  
 be of þat noumbre of whiche god plenij be þe prophete ose,  
 saiunge, ‘þai regneden but not be me, saiþ god.’ And ȝif we  
 holden þat þat is forboden, here we þat is bodyn of criste: ‘he  
 þat is gratter of ȝow, loke þat he be made as ȝongar \*in  
 sympilnes; and he þat is forgoer, loke he be a seruant.’ þis  
 is þe forme of þe apostles lijfe; lordeschip is forboden, &  
 seruyse is boden.” þis saiþ saynt bernarde þere. And þerfore  
 no man may putt an oþere grownde biadis þat þat is putt, þe  
 whiche is criste ihesu.

Efforts of the  
 clergy to main-  
 tain their lord-  
 ship.

Acts iii. [8.]

\*[p. 326 MS.]  
 St. Peter had no  
 possessions; yet  
 they call their  
 dominion St.  
 Peter's ground.

[Bernardus de  
 consideratione]  
 libro ii. [cap. 6.]

1 Peter v. [8.]

\*[p. 33 MS.]

Hosea viii. [4.]

\*[p. 336 MS.]

## Capitulum viij.

Vt þit I wote wellþ þat and clerkis & religious folke þat  
 b louen unkyndely þes lordlynes, willen glose here & say þat  
 þai occupien not siche lordeschipis in propir, as seculer  
 lordis done, but in comoun, like as þe apostles & þe perfite<sup>1</sup> peple  
 diden in þe begynnyng of cristis chirche, þe whiche hadden  
 alle þinge in comoun, like as suche clerkis & religious saien  
 þai han now. In tokenyng wherof as no man sayd of eny  
 \*þinge þat tyme, "þis is myne;" so oure clerkis & religious,  
 namely, whan þai will speke in termis of her religion. A pri-  
 uate persone wille not say, "þis or þis is myne," but in persone  
 of alle his breþern he wille say, "þis is oure." And ouer alle þis  
 þai saien, more sutilly, þat þai occupie not þis bi title of seculer  
 lordeschip, but be title of perpetual almes. But whateuer þis  
 peple saien here, we mot take hede to þe rewle of prefe þat  
 fayliþ not, þe whiche rule cristis techiþ vs in þe gospel in  
 dyuers placis, wher he saiþ: "leue þe þe werkis, for whi by  
 her werkis þe schul knowe hem." And þis rule is wondir  
 nedefulle to a man þat haþ a do wiþ eny men of þe pha<sup>\*</sup>riseis  
 condicions; For, as cristis saiþ, "þai saien but þai done not."  
 And so as cristis werkis beren witnes of hym, as he hym  
 sijlfe saiþ, & schewdyn what he was & how he lyued; so þe  
 dedis & þe maner of lyuyng, or þe þinge in it sijlfe beriþ  
 witnesse wiþ-oute fayle how it stondiþ amonge hem in þis  
 poynte. And if we take hede þus bi þis rule we schal se at  
 yþe how þe clergie saiþ here oþer-wyse þan it is. For in sum  
 place in priuate persone, and in sum place in comune, or  
 persone aggregate, whiche is alle cone, as saynt austyn saiþ  
 vp þe sawter, þe clergi occupieþ<sup>2</sup> þe seculer lordeschip  
 seculerli, & so in propre. For in þe same wise as þe baron  
 or þe knyght occupieþ & gouerneþ his baronrye or his knyghte,

Acts iv. 32.

Clergy say they  
have no private  
property, but  
hold in common.

\*[p. 34 MS.]

They say, too,  
that they do not  
occupy as lords,  
but by perpetual  
almes.John x. [38], and  
xiv. [11.]

\*[p. 346 MS.]

Matt. xxiii. [3.]

This is untrue.

<sup>1</sup> profite MS.<sup>2</sup> occupier MS.

so after þe amor<sup>\*tesynge</sup> occupieþ þe clerke, þe monke or chanon, þe colage or þe couente þe same lordeschip, and gounerniþ it by þe same lawis in iugement & ponyschinge; as prisounynge & hangynge, wiþ sicke oþer worldly turmentynge, þe whiche sum-tyme bylongyd oonly to þe seculer arme of þe chirche. þhe, oft-tymys we may se how þai bissyen hem to be kyngis in her owne, & reiocyen hem fulls myche in þat cyuylite or seculerte, ȝif þai may gete it. And þis is an euydence þat þai wold gladly be kyngis of alle þe rewme or þe worlde. For wher her londis & seculer mennys franchisen to-gydir, þai stryuen who schal haue þe galows or oþer maner turmentis for felouns. þei kepen also vndir bondage her tenauntis & her <sup>\*issue</sup> wiþ her londis. And þis is þe mooste cyuylite or seculer lordeschipinge þat eny kyng or lorde haþ on his tenauntis. And þerfore we may se hou þai claymen in her goodis a maner of propre possession, contrary to þe comounynge of þe comon goodis in tyme of þe perfyte men in þe begynnynge of cristis chirche. And what-so-euer þe clergye sayen, þair dedis schewyn wells þat þai han not her goodis in comoun, lyke as cristis wiþ his apostles & perfyte men hadden in þe begynnynge of cristis chirche. For in holdynge or havyng of her goodis is *propir* of possessyon & seculer lordeschipynge, þe whiche stondiþ not wiþ þe plente of cristis perfeccion in prestis; as it sueþ of þis processe \*and of þat þat is declarid before. And as for þat oþer glose þat clerkis han here, where þai saien þat þai holden þes lordeschipis by title of perpetual almes. But here ȝe schul undirstonde þat mercy or almes is a wille of relevyng of a wreche oute of his mysese, as lyncolnyence saiþ in þe bygynnynge of his <sup>\*dictis</sup>. So þat ȝif a man schuld do effectually almes, he most loke þat he to whom he schuld do almes wer in mysese and had nede to be releuyd. In tokenynge wherof cristis oonly assigneþ almes to þo in whom he markiþ mysese. And so of þis it wille sue, þat ȝif a man releue oo wreche & markiþ an oþere or mo, he doþe noon almes, <sup>\*but</sup> raþer markiþ mysese. And myche more he doþe

[p. 35 MS.]  
They hold just as  
the knight or  
baron does,  
and execute lay  
justice.

They quarrel  
with lay lords  
for the gallows;  
they hold bonds-  
men.  
\*[p. 35b MS.]

Perpetual alms.  
Definition of  
alms.

[Marginal note  
in later hand "of  
lyncolne, Robert  
grosted was bis-  
hope a<sup>o</sup> 1253, be-  
fore Wicklyf 120  
yeres."]  
Ditto ff.

Luke xiv. [14.]

It is not alms  
to relieve one  
wretch and  
make another,  
\*[p. 36b MS.]

or to give to  
those that have  
no need;

and for this pur-  
pose to take  
property from  
those to whom  
God has given it,  
is breaking his  
laws.

\*[p. 37 MS.]  
[2] Cor. viii. [13,  
etc.]

Quod superest  
date elemosinam.  
Luke xi. [41.]

\*[p. 37b MS.]

No alms, then, to  
give the clergy  
what God gave to  
secular lords.

God provided  
sufficiently for  
the clergy.  
\*[p. 38 MS.]

noone almes þif he make riche þo þat han noone nede, for als  
myche as þai ben sufficiente to hem sijlf. þis haþ no colour  
of almesse, for þis may bettir be callid a woodnesse or a  
wastyng of goddis goodis. And ouer þis, if a man take þo goodis  
þe whiche god in þe best wise, euen & wiþ-owte errouris, haþ  
assigned to þe state of secular lordis, & ȝeue þo goodis to eny  
peple þat haþ noone nede of hem, ȝhe, to whiche peple siche  
goodis ben forfendit, þis schuld be callid noone almesse, but  
peruertynge of goddis ordynance, & þe destruccyon of þe  
state of secular lordis, þe whiche god haþ aprouyd in his  
chirche. for as \*saynt poule saiþ, "Almes-dede schuld be so  
rewlid þat it wer relevynge to þo þat ressavyn it, and no  
tribulacion to þo þat ȝeuen it." And myche raþer it schuld  
not be vndoynge of þo þat done it. And herfore criste techiþ  
in þe gospels to do almes of þo þinges þat ben needeles or  
superflue. And in þis dede a man schulde haue rewarde to  
þe nede of hym þat he doþ almes to, and to þe charge of his  
owne house. what almes þan I pray þe was it to vndo þe  
state of þe emperoure, & make þe clerkis riche wiþ his  
lordechipsis? namely, siþ crist confermyd to þe emperour his  
state wiþ þo þingis þat longyd þer-to, not-wiþstondynge þat  
þe emperours þat tyme was heþen. And he haþ forfen\*dit  
expresly his clergy in worde & in ensauple siche lordeschip.  
And as þis was noone almes, so we mote say of oþer kyngys,  
dukis & erlis, barons & knyȝtis, þat ben vndo herby, & þe  
clerkis made riche & worldely lordis wiþ her goodis. wher-  
fore it may riȝtfully be sayde: "No man may putt an-oþer  
grounde bi-sidis þat þat is putt þe whiche is crist ihesu."

### Capitulum ix.

Ere we may se, bi þe grounde of þe gospels and be  
h þe ordenance of criste, þat þe clergy was sufficiently  
purveyed for lyfelode. For god is so parfyte in alle his  
worchynges þat he may ordeyn no state in his chirche but  
if he ordeyn sufficient liflode to þe sa\*me state. And þis

is open in goddis lawe whoso takiþ heede. And þat vndir as for all states. euery lawe of god as vndir þe law of innocens & of kynde, vndir þe lawe ȝeue by moyses, and also vndir þe lawe ȝouen by criste. In þe tyme of þe state of innocence, we know wel by bileue þat god had so ordeyned for mankynde, þat it schulde haue had lyfode I-now; ȝhe, wiþ-owte eny tenefulle labours. And of þe lawe of kynde criste spekiþ in þe gospels, seyinge þus: "Alle þinges þat ȝe<sup>1</sup> wollen þat oþer Matt. vii. [12.] men done to ȝou, do ȝe to hem." And if þis lawe had be kepte, þer schuld no man haue be mischeuously nedy. And in þe tyme of þe lawe ȝeue by moyses god \*made a fullle \*[p. 386 MS.] & sufficient ordenance for alle his peple, and assigned þe fyrste fruytis and tipis to þe prestis & deeknes. And alle-þou; þat he wolde þat þer schulde be alleway pore men in þe londe of israelle, ȝit he made an ordenance aȝens myscheuous nedis, & commaundit alle þe peple þat þer schulde be on no wyse a nedy man and a beggere amonge hem; as it is wryten. Deut. xv. [4.] And so in þis lawe he ordeynyd sufficiently I-now for his peple. And in þe tyme of þe new lawe criste assignyd þe seculer lordeschipis to temporalle lordes, as it is tauȝte byfore, and alowid þe comonte her lifode goten bi true merchandise & hosbondrie and oþer craftis, and in worde & ensauple he tauȝte his prestis \*to be procuratouris for nedy peple & \*[p. 39 MS.] pore at þe ryche men, & specifyed þes pore, & tauȝte how þai Priests should be þat wer myȝty schuld make a purviance for syche pore folke, proctores with the þat þai wer not constrenyd by nede for to begge; as grete clerkis merken vp-on þis worde of þe gospels where criste saiþ þus: "When þu makist þine feeste," þat is, of almes, Luke xiv. [12.] "calle pore, feble, lame & blynde." He saiþ not "latt sicke pore men calle vp-on þe," but: "calle þu;" menyng in þat, þat þu schuldist make a purvyance for sicke peple þat þai be not myscheuously fauȝty. And for þe clergy he ordenyd sufficiently, techinge hem in worde and in ensauple hou þai and should be schuld holde hem apayde wiþ lyfode & helynge, mynystred to satisfied with food and raiment.

<sup>1</sup> we MS.

\*[p. 396 MS.]

hem for her true labour \*in þe gospels, as it is wryten to-fore. Of þis þan þu mayst se hou; god in alle his lawis haþ sufficiently ordend for alle þe statis þat he foundit and aproued. And hou; it were a;ens þe goodnes and þe wisdom of god to orden eny state but if he ordend sufficyent lifode þerto. Siþ þen þis ordenance of god was sufficyent, als wells for þe

Presumption in adding to the provision made by Christ,

clergi as for oþer men, it semih a foule presumption to brynge in a new and a contrary ordenance of lifode for clerkis, vp-on þat ordenance þat crist had made for hem by-fore. Of þe

which was enough in the early Church.

whiche ordenance þe clergy fulls many yere aftir þe bi-gynnynge of cristis chirche, whan it was best gouernyd,

\*[p. 40 MS.]

helden hem a-payde. For þis menep þat cristis \*ordenance was insufficyent & worthi to be vndo. And if we take goode heede, þai hadden no more nede to plene hem of þis orde-

The other states are content with Christ's ordinance.

naunce þan hadden þe oþer two statis of his chirche, þe whiche in-to þis day holden hem apayde wiþ þis ordenance of crist, and desyren in grete party þat þis fayre and sufficient ordenance of crist were fully kepte. And more

Christ's promise assures them of livelihood.

sikirnes or ensurance may no man make of eny-þinge þan crist haþ of þis lifode to þe clergy. For crist not oonly affermiþ to þe peple þat he wills not fayle hem in lifode & helynge, but also preueþ þis by argumentis þat may not be asoyld, so þat þai be true seruandis to hym. For crist

Matt. vi. [26.]

meniþ þus in his arguynge þer: "Siþ god fayleþ not briddis

\*[p. 406 MS.]

\*and lilies and grasse þat growen in þe felde, neiþer heþen men, hou myche raþer schal he not fayle his true seruandis."

So perpetual alms means distrust of God's governance.

And so þis purvyance of perpetual almes, þat our clerkis speken of, meniþ fawte of bileue & dispeire of þe gracious gouernance of god. Siþ þan, as it is sayde bifore, it is noone

almes to releue oo wreche and make an oþer or mo; and to make hem riche wiþ temporalle lordeschip, þe whiche ben forfendit to sicke peple; and namely if sicke almes-gevyng be distroynge or apeyrynge of eny state apreyd of god in his chirche, it wills sue þat þe endowyng of þe clergy wiþ worldly lordeschipe owit not to be callid almes, but raþer alle a mysse, or wastynge of goddis goodes, \*or distroynge of his

Endowment should not be called "almes," but "all a misse," \*[p. 41 MS.]

ordenance, For as myche as þe clergi was sufficiently ordeynyd  
 by criste. For whi þis almes þat clerkis speken of here  
 made many wrechis, And it was þoue to hem þat hadde no  
 nede. And þus it is enpeyrynge not oonly of oone estate of All three estates  
are the worse for  
it. þe chiroche, but of alle þre, of þe whiche I spoke of in þe  
 bigynnyng. And so þis almes-þevynge haþ made alle owre  
 rewme, þhe, & as I suppose, fullø nye all crestyndome, full  
 pore and nedy and myscheuous ouer þat it schuld have be if  
 þe clergy had holde hem payde wiþ cristis ordenance. But  
 now þorou þis perpetual alamyse þat þe clerkis and religious Christ's ordi-  
nance  
is  
overthrowen. folke callen almes, cristis ordenaunce is vndo in sum londis  
 hooly, & in ynglonde for þe more party. \*And it is likly to \*[p. 418 MS.]  
 be alle vndo in processe of tyme. For by amortesynge of  
 lordeschipis þe lordis ben vndo in grete party. And þo þat  
 ben leste, by-cause þat hem lakkiþ her owne party þorow  
 foly þifte of her auncestreris, ben ful nedi. Ferþirmore it may  
 be vndirstonde of þis processe þat wiþdrawynge of þes Withdrawing  
endowments  
from the Church  
is not robbery,  
but restitution. lordeschipis from þe clergi, and restorynge of hem to þe statis  
 þat god haþ assignyd hem to, schuld not be callid robbery  
 of holy chirche, as oure clerkis sayen, but raþer riȝtwise  
 restitucious of goode wrongfully and þeuely wiþholde. And  
 þerfore þer may noon oþe or a-vow bynde eny man to  
 mayntene þis þeste and distrynge of goddis ordenance, and  
 þis greete harmynge of cristis chirche, as þe vow of iepte Judges xi.  
 schulde not have bounde \*him to kille & to sacrifice his owne \*[p. 42 MS.]  
 douȝter. Ne þe oþe of herode schuld not haue bounde hym Mark vi. [26.]  
 to kill innocent Ion. But as Jepte schulde have broken  
 his oþe or avow, and han offred an-oþer þinge þat had  
 be plesynge to god and acordynge wiþ his lawe, as saynt [Austin.]  
 awstyn saiþ vp-on þe same storie, so herode schuld have De questionibus  
veteris & nove  
legis. broke his oþe, and a-savyd innocent blode, and sore a-  
 repentid hym for his vnawysid swerynge. And so schulden  Lords are not  
bound by oaths,  
since the things  
which they have  
sworn to main-  
tain are wrongful. lordis nowe breke her oþis, þat þai han unawisely and  
 wiþoute cowncel of holy scripture sworne to mayntene þis  
 þeste; þhe, heresy and symonye, as it is proued bifore, þe  
 whiche oure clerkis callen perpetual almes. And not þus sue

- \*[p. 42b MS.] her *predecessouris* or *progenitouris* in \*her foly dedis and oþis þat þai han made to mayntene þis mischeuous *peruertynge* of cristis ordenance; for as þe state of þe clergi haþ no power ne leue to make þe peple or þe lordis to synne deedly, or to distroye goddis ordenance in his chirohe, so þai have no leue or power of god to cowncelle or to constreyne in eny case þe lordis or þe peple to swere to mayntene þis endowyng of þe clerkis and religious folke, þe whiche is fulls grete þeste, heresy & symony, and wondir harmfulls to cristis chirohe; as it is schewyd in þis *processe* and in oþer writen bifore. But þe lordis specialy schulde se here what wer plesynge not to þes clerkis but to god. And þat schulde þai do; for her-to þai ben bounden by vertu of her office vp payne of dampnacion. And þer may no man dispence \*wiþ hem of þat boonde, stondynge her state. for no man schuld putt an oþer grounde bisidis þat þat is putt, þe whiche is criste ihesu.
- \*[p. 43 MS.]

### Capitulum x.

It is deemed  
wrong to alienate  
entailed land,

even for service  
done, or as alms.  
\*[p. 43b MS.]

Then it is wrong  
to take the pro-  
perty that God  
has assigned for  
ever to one state

Nd þerfore men demen it a grete synne to þeue lande a entaylid by mannys lawe fro þe *persone* or þe kynred þat it is entaylid to; þhe, alle-þou; it be not so þouen for euer but for a litills tyme. And þou; it be so þat þe *persone* or kynred, þat sicke londe is þeue to, be nedy and haue leue by goddis lawe to occupie sicke *maner* londe or lordeschip. and þis [is] demyd fulls grete synne amonge þe peple, not onoly to þe þeuer, but also to þe takers, for boþe þai done dampnable wronge to hem þat it is entaylid to, as þe peple demþ; þhe, alle-þou; it be þeue for goode and true seruyce þat þe resseyuour \*haþ done to þe þeuer bifore, or ellis bi way of almes of relevynge of þe *persone* or kynred þat is þeue to. Hou; myche raþer þan, I pray þe, wiþ-owte comparyson, is it a grete synne, as wel to þe ressauieris as to þe þeueris, to take þe lordeschip þe whiche god, þat haþ fulls lordeschip up-on alle þe worlde, haþ



þoue bi perpetual lawe or riȝte to þe stade of seculer lordis,  
 and þene þis fro þat state, to þe whiche god entaylid þis <sup>and give it to another.</sup>  
 lordeschip, to an-*oþer* straunge peple of an-*oþir* lyne, þe  
 whiche haþ neþer nede ne leue of god for to occupie it.  
 And if oure prestis clayme tiþis as goodis in a maner entaylid  
 to hem, for als myche as god in þe olde lawe had þoue &  
 entailed siche tiþis to þe kynred of levy and to noone *oþer*  
 lyne; For cristen cam of þe lynyage of \*Juda, to whiche lyne <sup>[p. 44 MS.]</sup>  
 was no tiþis grauntid; And so as men supposen þis entaile  
 was not expressly confermyd bi cristen and his apostles to his  
 prestis in þe new lawe. For as it is writen in pollicronicon,  
 þe sevenþe boke, gregor þe sexte ordenyd first tiþis to be  
 payde to curatis oonly. And þitt þai claymen so ferforþli <sup>The clergy claim  
tithes as inalien-  
able,</sup>  
 þes tiþis, þat no man lawfully may wiþ-holde hem or minystre  
 hem save þai. Ne þai may be turnyd or þouen to eny *oþer*  
 state or kynred saue oonly to hem, all-þou; men wolden do  
 þat undir coloure or bi titille of perpetualle almes; for þis  
 schulde be demyd of þe clergy a dampnable synne & dis-  
 troyng of holy chirche & sacrilege. Hou myche raþer þen  
 is it an hidous and a \*dampnable synne, to þene or to take <sup>[p. 44 MS.]</sup>  
 away þe seculer lordeschipis fro þe state of seculer lordis, þe <sup>but secular lord-  
ships are held by  
even stronger  
sanction.</sup>  
 whiche god had þene & entaylid to hem, bi þe same lawe  
 & riȝte by þe whiche he had þouen þe tiþis to þe prestis in þe  
 olde lawe? and þis entaile was neuer interrupte or y-broken  
 in-to cristis tyme & his apostles; and þen þai confermyd þis  
 entaile bi lawe so stronge to þe seculer party þat no man,  
 save anticristen and his disciples, may openly enpugne þis  
 entaile, as it is schewid bifore. And so as no man schuld  
 presume to wiþdrawe, wiþholde or turne þe tiþis fro þe state  
 of presthode, as þai sayne; so myche raþer schuld no man  
 presume bi þeunge or takynge to aliene þe temporal lorde-  
 \*schips fro þe state of seculer lordis. And þus clerkis han <sup>[p. 45 MS.]</sup>  
 not so myche coloure to sai þat þe lordis & þe lay peple  
 robben holy chirche, if þai wiþdrew þe tiþis fro hem, for als  
 miche as þai han take her temporaltes fro hem. And þis <sup>Yet the clergy  
have taken them  
by robbery, and</sup>  
 takynge of þes temporaltes in-to þe handis of þe clergy haþ

that under pre-  
tence of holiness,

Gen. III.

as Luelfer de-  
ceived Adam and  
Eve.

\*[p. 455 MS.]

Religious corpo-  
rations are bound  
by their own law  
not to part with  
any possessions,  
even to their  
founder.

\*[p. 46 MS.]

Much more, then,  
should laymen  
not part with  
property to  
priests.

They have quite  
enough with  
\*[p. 465 MS.]  
tithes and offer-  
ings,

neuer þe lesse malice of robrye & cause of malice in it sijlfe, for als miche as it is done by symylacion of holynes, þe whiche is double wickidnes. For þus lucifer robbid Adam boþe of goodis of fortune, of kynde, and of grace. As þe clergi haþ robbid, and ȝit doþe, þe chirche of þes þre maner goodis; For riȝt as lucifer did þis harme to adam & eue, vndir colour of loue & frendschip & helpynge of hem, so done now; \*his awngelis, þes ypocritis, þat transfigure hem sijlf in-to awngellis of liȝt, and disseyuen þe pepill by fals by-heest of heuenly help, þat þai willen procure to hem for her goodis as þai sayen. And if a bischop and his colage, or an abbot and his couent, may not alien fro hem eny of þe temporalateis þat þai han, ne ȝeue to her founder eny of þo possessions þat he haþ ȝoue hem, what nede þat euer he haue, I-bounden oonly by a posityue lawe or a tradycion þat þai han hem sijlfe made; And if eny sicke lordeschips be wiþ-drawe, Alienyd or take fro hem by rechelesnes of her pre-decessouris, þai owȝten on all wise, ȝhe, in-to þe deþe, labore to [gete] þo possessions in-to her hondis \*aȝen, as þai saien; Hou myche more þan schuld not a seculere lorde or a layman aliene fro hym & his issue, or fro þe state of seculere lordis þe seculer lordeschippis þe whiche god haþ lymtyd to þat state? Siȝ he is bounden by þe lawe of kynde for to ordeyne for his children. And ouer þis he is bounden by goddis lawe to susteyne þe state of seculer lordis, þe whiche is autorisid in þe chirche bi criste and his apostelis. Of þis processe þen, if a man take hede, he schal perceyue þe falsnes of þis glose, whan oure clerkis and religious folke saien þat þai holden þes lordeschips oonly by tytill of perpetual almes. For certis siȝ þes tipis & þis offryngis, þe whiche as I suppose cowntirvaylen þe seculer lordis rentis of þe rewme or \*ellis passen as it is full likly (For þou; þai be lesse in oo chirche, þai passen in an-oþer) and ben sufficient for alle þe prestis in cristendome, & þai wer euen delyd; þen it wer no nede to amortise seculer lordeschips to þe state of þe clergi; þe whiche amortesyng is vndoynge of lordis & apostasie of þe

clergy. And if þis amortasyngē wer not nedefulle, þen wer it noone almes, as it is declarid. And ouer þe tīpingis and offeringes þat ben now of certeyne, þe clerkis han many grete & smale perquisitiuys, þe whiche smachen of symony and <sup>and fees, of which some smack of</sup> extorcion; as þe first fruytis of vacant beneficis, prouynge of <sup>simony.</sup> testamentis, for halowyngē of chapels, chirchis, chauncellis and oþer ounementis of þe chirche, & for sacryngē of ordres, & fulle many mo þat for multitude may not \*wel be nowmbred. \*[p. 47 MS.] For wells ni; alle her blessingis ben sett to sale and to prise <sup>All blessings set to sale.</sup> in-to crystenynge & confirmacion. wherfor I may now sai, as I sayd at þe bigynnyngē; “Fundamentum aliud,” &cetera—“No man may putt an-oþer ground bysidis þat þat is putt, þe whiche is criste ihesu.” Þe whiche grounde of lyvyngē criste graunte vs to kepe, þat we may ascape þe euerlastynge paynys of helle. Amen.

### [Appendix.]

#### [On the Wrongfulness of the Clergy holding Secular Office.]

Here-aftir it schal be schewid what peryl it is to prestis to be in secular office, and to lordis to suffre hem þer-inne, or to excite hem þer-to.

Eynt Cypriane saiþ þat þorow þe councele of bischopis þer <sup>xxj q. iij cap. Ciprianus.</sup> is made a statute, þat alle þat ben charchid wiþ pręsthode \*and ordeynyd in þe service of clerkis schulde not serue \*[p. 47b MS.] but to þe auter, and to mynystres sacramentis, and to take hede to prayers and orysonis. Hit is for-soþe writen: “no man <sup>2 Tim. ii. [4.]</sup> berynge his knythode to god entrike hym wiþ secular nedis;” þe whiche oure bischopis and oure prędecessouris biholdynge religiously & purveyngē hoolsumly, dempten þat who so euer take mynystres of þe chirche fro spirituelle office to secular, þat þer be noone offryngē done for hym, ne eny sacrifice halowyd for his sepulture. For þai disserven not to be

- nempnyd byfore þe auter of god in þe prayer of prestis, þe whiche willen clepe away prestis & mynystres of þe chirche fro þe auter. Dis saiþ saynte Cipriane. Here men mow se
- \*[p. 48 MS.] how perylous it is to þe kyng & seculer lor\*dis to wiþholde eny preste in seculer bissynes. Dis is preuyd þus, for euery
- Luke xvi. [1.] seculers lorde by þe lawe of þe gospells is goddis bayly. But
- A lord who sets a priest to secular office is like a bailiff who sets his master's servant to his own work. if eny bayly hiryd a werkeman wiþ his lordis goode and putt hym to his owne seruyce, he must nede be vntrue to his
- lorde. Riȝt so is euery seculers lorde to oure lorde ihesu criste, but if he amende hym, þat takiþ a preste and puttþ hym in his seculer office; brekyng þe heest of his lorde god þat commaundiþ: "þu schalt couett noon oþer mannys seruande." And he wiþdrawiþ hym fro þe seruyce of god & fro þe kepyng of cristen mennys soulis, þe whiche he haþ take charge of, for whiche soulis oure lorde ihesu criste toke
- \*[p. 48b MS.] fleisch and blode, and suffred \*harde deþe, and schedde his owne hert blode. Dis perylous doyng of seculer lordis is boþe aȝens goddis lawe and mannys. It is aȝen goddis lawe; For
- 2 Tim. ii. [4.] as saynt poule saiþ: "No man þat is a parfyte knyȝt of god, as euery prest schulde be bi his ordre, entirmete hym wiþ worldly nedis & bissynessis." And for þis ende, þat he may so plese þat lorde to whose service he haþ putt hym-silfe, and þat is god. For sicke worldly bissynes in clerkis is aȝens
- He is acting against God's law. her ordre, and þerfore þe apostles sayden, as it is wryten in þe deedis of þe apostles: "It is not euen vs to forsake þe
- Example of the apostles. Acts vi. [2.] worde of god and mynstir to bordis of pore folke." And if it was vnequite, as þe apostles sayden in her common decre, hem for to leue þe prechyng of goddis worde & ministre to
- \*[p. 49 MS.] þe \*bordis of pore men; hou myche more vnequite and wronge to god & man is it, prestis to leue contemplacion, studie, prayers & preching of goddis worde, and mynistryng
- iii. decre in fine. to pore folke, for þe service of a seculers lorde. Hit is also
- It is also against the Pope's law. aȝens þe popis lawe; For he spekiþ to a bischop and biddiþ hym þat [he] warne openly prestis and clerkis þat þai be not occupied in seculer office, ne procuratouris of seculer lordis nedis & her goodis. And if prestis and clerkis ben so bolde

to occupie hem in sicke bissynges, and if þai falle aftir bi losses of lordis goodis; þan saiþ þe lawe, it is not worþi þat þai be holpen and socoured of holy chirche, siþ þorou hem holy chirche is sclaudred. And saynte gregori wrote to þe defen- [Gregory.] sours of rome in þis maner: "It is tolde to vs þat oure moost reue\*rent broþer basile þe bischop is occupied in secular \*[p. 496 MS.] causis, and kepith vnprofetably moote hallis; whiche þinge makith hym foule and distryeþ þe reuerence of presthode. þerfore a-noone as þu hast ressayvid þis maundement, co[m]pell hym wiþ scharp execucion to turne aȝen. So þat it be not lefull to þe by noone excusacion to tarye it fyve days; lest if in eny maner þu suffir hym eny langer to tary þer-inne, þu to be coupable wiþ hym anentis vs." And so bischoppis & oþir prelati ben holden to teche and enforme lordis to wiþdraw hem fro þis synne, and scharply to repreue prestis and curatis vnder hem þat þai ocupie no secular office. þis is prouyd þus. þe holy prophete Ezechiel saiþ: "If þe \*wayte or þe wacche-man se ennemys cum, and if þe peple \*[p. 50 MS.] be not warnyd & kepe not hem sijlfe, but ennemys cummen & sle þe peple; þen saiþ god þat þe pepille is take in her wickidnes. And of þe waite þat schuld have blowe in his horne wille god axe accountis and reknyng of þe blode and of þe deþe of þe peple." But now to goostly vnderston[din]ge euery bischop schuld be a waite or a wacchman, to telle & to warne byfore to alle þe peple by his goode lyvyng and techyng þe perelle of synne. And þis is þe reson whi bischoppis and oþir prelati & prestis schulde not be occupied wiþ worldly nedis and causis; For sicke occupacions and chargis maken prestis slepyng & slumbryng in synne. And þerfore it is grete perelle to lordis to make \*ouer hem goostly waytis and wacchmen, as bischoppis, persones and vikers, þat ben sleepers & slombreris in lustis of þe fleysch, & blyndid wiþ poudir of couetise of worldly riches, and so occupied in worldly nedis þat þai neiþer kan ne may kepe hem sijlfe, ne noone oþer man. For of þis perelle & sicke oþir a prelate þat haþ witt and kunnyng schulde scharply

Bishops should  
warn lords  
against this sin.

Every bishop  
should be a  
watchman, to  
warn the people  
against sin.

[p. 506 MS.]  
Lords should be  
careful not to set  
up sleepy watch-  
men.

repreue & warne alle maner men, to þe schedyng of his owne blode, as criste did; and if he leue & blame not, þen he assentip to her trespassis and synneþ deedly. For as saiþ þe prophete malachie: "prestis lippis kepyn kunynge, and þe pepille schal axe þe lawe of god of his mouþe; for he is þe awngelle of god if he kepe welle þe ordre & þe degre of prest\*hode." And þerfore it is not lefulle to eny man to drawe to seculere office þe messengeris of criste, þat haþ so vttrly forfendit hem boþe in worde and in dede seculere office in præsthode.

If eny man stonde in doute of þis sentence before; here suen autoritees of holy scripture and holy doctouris in latyn aþens þe seculer lordeschip of prestis.

Ivilis aut secularis possessio fuit interdicta sacerdotibus & c leuitis, ut patet Numer. xviii. Dixit dominus ad Aaron:

In terra eorum nichil possidebitis, nec habebitis partem inter eos: Ego pars et hereditas tua in medio filiorum israel. filijs autem leui dedi omnes decimas israelis in possessionem, pro \*ministerio quo seruiunt mihi in tabernaculo federis. Sequitur: Solis filiis leui mihi in tabernaculo seruientibus, & portantibus peccata populi, legitimum sempiternum erit in generacionibus vestris. Nichil aliud possidebunt, decimarum oblacione contenti, quas in usus eorum<sup>1</sup> et necessaria separau. Item Deut. xviii<sup>o</sup>: Non habebunt sacerdotes et leuite & omnes qui de eadem tribu sunt partem & hereditatem cum reliquo populo israel; quia sacrificia domini et oblaciones eius comedent, et nihil aliud accipient de possessione fratrum suorum. Deus enim ipse est hereditas eorum, sicut locutus est illis. Super quo glosa: Ministris altaris nec terrenis possessionibus acquirendis concessum est inhiare. vnde Matt. x. 9.]

<sup>1</sup> eorum MS.

pecuniam &c<sup>a</sup>. et post pauca: dignus est operarius cibo suo. Et alibi, Qui altari deseruiunt cum altare \*participant. Non enim oportum, quod qui semper altari debent seruire officio diuino, inhient terreno lucro, quibus dominus hereditas est. Quid ergo illi deesse potest qui omnia habentem habet. hec ibi. Item ezechiel xliiii: Non autem erit eis hereditas, [1 Cor. ix. 13.] [Ezek. xlv. 28.] ego hereditas eorum; et possessionem non dabitis eis in israel, ego enim possessio eorum. Victimam pro peccato et pro delicto ipsi comedent, et omne votum in israel ipsorum erit. Super quo Jeronimus, libro xiii<sup>o</sup> super ezechielem: Qui autem talis extiterit ut ministret in sanctuario, et ingrediatur atrium interius, et offerat deo sacrificium, ita ut verus sacerdos sit, ymmo imitator eius de quo scriptum est, tu es sacerdos in eternum secundum ordinem melchisedech; iste nullam habebit partem nisi deum, qui est hereditas eius, nec accipiet possessionem in israel, hoc est inter vulgus ignobile, sed sacerdotalem, ut dicat de eo dominus: ego sum possessio et hereditas eius; quem cum venerit loquatur ac dicat, \*tenebo illum nec dimittam illum; et psallet cum [p. 525 MS.] propheta, pars mea dominus. hec ille. Item, deut<sup>o</sup> x<sup>o</sup>: Non habuit leui partem in possessionibus cum fratribus suis, quia ipse dominus possessio eius, sicut promisit ei. Item, Josue xliiii: non acceperunt aliam in terra partem nisi urbes ad habitandum, et suburbana earum ad alenda iumenta et pecora. Item, eccl. xlv<sup>o</sup>: Nam sacrificia domini edent, que dedit ipsi et semini eius. ceterum in terra gens<sup>1</sup> non hereditabit, et pars non est illi in gente. ipse enim pars eius est et hereditas. Item, Mat. xx<sup>o</sup>: Scitis quia principes gencium dominantur eorum, et qui maiores sunt potestatem exercent in eos; non ita erit inter vos, sed quicumque voluerit inter vos maior esse, sit vester minister. Et quicumque voluerit inter vos primus esse, erit vester seruus. Sicut filius hominis non venit ministrari sed ministrare, et dare animam suam redemptionem pro multis. Idem patet

<sup>1</sup> sic. MS. Vulgate, gentis.

\*[p. 53 MS.]  
[1 Pet. v. 2.]  
Matt. Luc.

Mat x<sup>o</sup> et luce xxii<sup>o</sup>. Item *prima petri quinto*: \*Pascite qui in vobis est *gregem domini*, providentes non coacti sed spontanee *secundum deum*: neque turpis *lucris gratia*, sed voluntarie: neque dominantes in clero, sed forma facti gregis

[1 Tim. vi. 8.]

ex animo. Item ad Thi<sup>m</sup> vi<sup>o</sup>: Habentes autem alimenta et quibus tegamur, hijs contenti simus. Nam qui volunt divites fieri incidunt in *temptacionem* et in laqueum diaboli. Item,

Luke [xiv. 33.]

luce xiv: Sic ergo omnis ex vobis qui non renunciat omnibus que possidet, non potest meus esse discipulus. Item,

[Bernardus de Consideratione, lib. ii. cap. vi.]

Bernardus libro ij ad Eugenium papam: Esto, ut alia quacumque ratione hec tibi vendices; sed non apostolico iure. nec enim ille tibi dare potuit quod non habuit: quod autem habuit, hoc dedit, sollicitudinem super ecclesias, numquid *dominacionem*. Audi ipsum. Non dominantes in clero, sed forma facti gregis ex animo. Et ne dictum sola humilitate putes; nonne etiam veritate. Vox enim domini

Luke [xxii. 25.]

est in euangelio. luce xxij<sup>o</sup>: Reges gentium dominantur eorum; et infert, vos autem non sic. Planum est, apostolis interdictum dominatus. Ergo tu et tibi usurpare audes aut dominans apostolatatum, aut apostolicus<sup>1</sup> dominatum. Plane ab alterutro prohiberis. Si utrumque simul habere velis, perdis utrumque. Alioquin non te exceptum putes de illo

Hosea [viii. 4.]

numero, de quibus sic conqueritur deus, Osee octavo: Ipsi regnauerunt sed non ex me. At si interdictum tenemus,

Luke [xxii. 26.]

audiamus edictum. luce xxii. Qui maior est vestrum, ait, fiat sicut iunior, et qui precessor est sicut qui ministrat. forma apostolica hec est; Dominacio interdictur, indicitur

Origenes.

ministratio. hec ibi. Item, Origenes super gen. omelia xvi<sup>o</sup>. Denique vis scire quid intersit inter sacerdotes domini et sacerdotes pharaonis. Pharao terras concedit sacerdotibus suis, dominus autem sacerdotibus suis partem non concedit in terra, sed dicit eis: Ego pars vestra. Observate ergo qui hec legitis, omnes domini sacerdotes, et videte que sit *differentia sacerdotum*, ne forte qui partem habent in terra,

<sup>1</sup> apostolatus MS.



et terrenis cultibus \*ac studijs vacant, non tam domini quam \*[p. 54 MS.]  
pharaonis sacerdotes esse videantur. Ille enim est qui vult  
sacerdotes suos habere possessiones, et exercere agri non  
anime culturam, Ruri sed non legi operam dare. Christus  
autem, dominus noster, sacerdotibus suis quid precipit  
audiamus: Qui non, inquit, renunciauerit omnibus que  
possidet, non potest meus esse discipulus. Negat christus  
suum esse discipulum quem viderit aliquid possidentem, et  
eum qui non renunciat omnibus que possidet. Et quid  
agimus? qui hec aut ipsi legimus, aut populis exponimus,  
qui non solum non renunciamus hijs que possidemus, sed &  
adquirere volumus ea que nunquam habuimus antequam  
veniremus ad papatum.<sup>1</sup> &c.<sup>a</sup> per processum. Item, parysiensis Parisiensis.  
libro de vicijs, titulo de auaricia mercenariorum: Sciebat  
dominus oculum ecclesie impediendum esse temporalibus istis  
ab officio suo; Modicum enim pulueris vel \*palee oculum \*[p. 54b MS.]  
omnino cessare facit ab officio suo. Immo voluit duces  
ecclesie pauperes esse, eo quod paupertas expedita est,  
sicut seneca dicit, et subdit: Si vis omnino vacare ut pauper  
sis, ora ut pauperi sis similis. Et si cetera membra corporis  
ad plura officia conueniant, ut lingua ad gustum et loquelam,  
et manus ad multa similiter, oculus tantum vnum habet, et  
contactum terre maxime timet. Sic oculus ecclesie con-  
templatiuus legi diuine debuit intendere, et a terrenis istis  
separari. licet pes hominis a ceteris membris eius seperatus  
non sit, tamen habet separatam artem que ei deseruit, &  
artifices qui ei totaliter circa calciamenta eius intenti sunt.  
Quanto magis debent esse aliqui qui totaliter spiritualibus  
sint intenti. Sed hodie magis occupata est ecclesia in  
temporalibus, quo ad magnam partem suam, quam fuerat  
sinagoga. vnde quum fuit datum a \*constantino imperium \*[p. 55 MS.]  
occidentali ecclesie, facta est vox de celo, dicens: hodie  
infusum est venenum ecclesie dei. hec ille. Item Odo in odo.  
sermone, Estote misericordes: Stercora putredinis sunt diuicie,

<sup>1</sup> 'Christum' Origen.

quibus volucres celi, i. demones, excecant oculos cupidorum. Et bene dicuntur diuicie stercora demonum, quum omnes diuicias reputant tanquam stercora, nec querunt nisi animam, vnde diues quum moritur quasi in tres porciones diuiditur; mundus rapit diuicias, vermes cadauer, et demones animam. Et quilibet contentus sua porcione alterius partem non desiderat; vnde versus:

Versus.

Spiritus est sathane, caro vermis mammona mundi;  
Vnica plus duplici pars sua cuique<sup>1</sup> placet.

[Phil. iii. 8.]

\*[p. 558 MS.]

Item non tantum a demonibus sed a perfectis diuicie stercora reputantur; vnde apostolus: Omnia reputaui tanquam stercora ut christum lucrifacerem. Pro hijs stercoribus cauidici clamant in foro; clerici quoque cantant in choro; medici cum egrotis vigilant \*in thalamo. Pro hijs stercoribus frequenter illicita committuntur in mundo. Sequitur: potius cum thobia gaudeamus, qui, curata cecitate quam per stercora contraxerat, visum recuperavit. Sic cum diuicie auferuntur oculum iusticie recuperamus. Cum gladius furioso aufertur, sanitate restituta, gracias refert illi qui abstulit. Similiter si dolemus pro ablacione temporalium, quibus excecatur, quibus interficimur, furiosi sumus. Et reddita nobis discrecione, saltem in alia vita, illi qui nobis stercora ab oculis nostris extersit, illi qui gladium abstulit gracias referemus. Alibi appellantur venenum; vnde eodem die quo a constantino dotata est ecclesia, in aere audita est vox angelica, dicens; hodie infusum est venenum in ecclesia; maior quidem effecta est in dignitate, sed minor religione. Item Odo in sermone Ecce nos reliquimus omnia: Abel moritur i. cura pastoralis, luctus spiritalis interimitur, set \*caym, i. possessio, conseruatur; ymmo pastor animarum caym agricola efficitur. Non enim in ecclesia queritur si sciat bene docere, pro peccatis lugere, set si sit caym, i. agricola; si sciat terras bene colere. Nec mirum si multos interficit possessio, cum sit venenum;

Odo.

\*[p. 56 MS.]

<sup>1</sup> cuilibet MS.

vnde eodem die quo dotata est ecclesia a constantino audita est vox in aere: hodie infusum est venenum in ecclesia; maior quidem dignitate, set minor religione. Si queritur: vbi est onus tibi commissum? respondet: Numquid custos fratris mei sum? quasi, Que cura est mihi de animabus, dummodo disponatur bene de temporalibus. Tales sicut caim sunt maledicti qui educunt ouem abel, et non reducunt, set seducunt. vnde Ezechiel: Pastores eorum seduxerunt eos. Item Gorham super illo Apoc. xii<sup>o</sup>: Misit serpens ex ore suo post mulierem aquam tanquam flumen, &c. Per aquam fluminis significatur \*abundancia temporalis, que fluit cotidie \*[p. 565 MS.] sicut aqua. vnde psalmista: diuicie si affluant, nolite cor apponere. hanc aquam habundantissime misit draco in ecclesiam dei, domino permittente, quum a constantino datum est imperium occidentali ecclesie; vnde tunc audita est vox angelorum<sup>1</sup> in aere dicentium: hodie infusum est venenum in ecclesia dei; sicut legitur in apocripho Siluestri. Et quia iam appropinquat venenum hoc ad cor ecclesie, ita ut iam sit suffocacio proxima, clamat ipsa ecclesia cum psalmista: Saluum me fac, deus, quoniam intrauerunt aque usque ad animam meam. Et deus de sua bonitate nunc primo incipit audire ecclesiam suam, et misit adiutorem suum, scilicet terram, que absorbere vult totum flumen; vel principem terrenum, qui vult auferre ab ecclesia omnia temporalia sua, licet intencio non eadem sit cum domino, qui propter bonum ecclesie mittit illum ex misericordia. hec ille. Item Jeronymus in vitis patrum: Jeronymus. Ecclesia ex quo creuit in possessionibus, decreuit in virtutibus. Item Jeronimus ad nepocianum ep. xxxiiii: Aut aurum \*[p. 57 MS.] repudiemus nos, sc. clerici, cum ceteris supersticionibus iudeorum, aut si aurum placeat, placeant et iudei, quos cum auro aut probare necesse est nobis aut dampnare. Item Jeronymus ad nepocianum: Clericus qui christi seruit ecclesie primo interpretetur vocab[u]lum suum, et nominis diffinitione prolata, nitatur esse quod dicitur. Si enim clericos grece latine

<sup>1</sup> anglorum MS.

sors appellatur, propterea clerici dicuntur quia de sorte sunt domini, vel quia dominus ipse sors, i. pars, clericorum est. Et quia et ipse pars domini est, et dominum partem habet, talem se exhibere debet, ut ipse possideat dominum et possideatur a domino. Qui enim dominum possidet, et cum propheta dicit: pars mea dominus, nichil extra dominum possidere potest; nam si quippiam aliud habuerit preter dominum, pars eius non erit dominus. verbi gratia, si aurum, si argentum, si possessionem, si variam suppellectilem habuerit, cum istis partibus dominus pars eius fieri non dignatur. Et paulo post: habens victum et vestitum hijs contentus ero, \*et nudus nudam crucem sequar. Obsecro te itaque repetens, iterum iterumque monebo, ne officium clericatus genus antique milicie putes, ne lucrum seculi in christi queras milicia, ne plus habeas quam quando clericus esse cepisti.

\*[p. 57b MS.]

Here suen autorites in latyn of holy scripture and doctouris aȝens secularis office of prestis.

[2 Tim. ii. 4.]

Aulus apostolus dicit ij thi. ij° ad excludendum prelatos p et sacerdotes ab omni seculari officio isto modo: Nemo militans deo implicat se negocijs secularibus, ut ei placeat cui se probavit. Iste autem textus brevis et compendiosus apostoli, ex fide quam importat, excluderet omnes sacerdotes et pure clericos ab omni officio seculari. Quum secularis officium est destructivum cure pastoralis. Immo ex canone apostolorum dicitur: \*Episcopus aut sacerdos aut diaconus nequaquam seculares curas assumant. Sin autem assumpserint deiciantur; quia, ut dicit gregorius ibidem, Inutile et valde laboriosum est hominem litteratum raciocinationum causas assumere, et in eis que non expedit se obligare. Item, ibidem dicit beatus ciprianus, cap° neque: In dispensacione ecclesie hanc regulam observandam nouerit unusquisque, ut nulli quantumlibet exercitate persone duo simul officia committat. Immo nomine sacerdotis careat qui dei ministros a suis evocet officiis. Et idem Ciprianus dicit quod ministri ecclesie debent solum

\*[p. 58 MS.]  
lxxxvij. de cap°. Epa.

altari et sacrificiis deservire, et precibus, studiis et oracionibus vacare. Et si quis eos a spirituali officio ad seculare duxerit, non offeretur pro eo oblatio, nec sacrificium pro sepultura eius celebrabitur; non enim ante altare dei merentur nominari in sacerdotum prece qui sacerdotes et ministros ecclesie ab altari volunt avocare. Immo dicit beatus Augustinus: fornicari hominibus nunquam licet, negociari autem \*aliquibus licet, aliis non licet. <sup>[p. 585 MS.] lxxxvii. de c.<sup>o</sup>. fornicari.</sup> Antequam enim ecclesiasticus quis sit, licet ei negociari; facto ecclesiastico iam non licet. Item ibidem scribitur sic: Tuicionem testamentorum episcopus non suscipiat. episcopus nullam rei familiaris curam ad se renocet, set lectioni et oracioni et verbo predicacionis tantummodo vacet. Item beatus petrus in epistola ad clementem dicit <sup>xl. q. 1.<sup>o</sup>. c.<sup>o</sup>.</sup> Sicut enim impietatis est crimen tibi, o clemens, neglectis verbi sicut dei studiis sollicitudines seculares suscipere, ita unicuique laicorum peccatum est nisi inuicem sibi ecclesiam in hijs que ad communis vsum vite pertinent operam fideliter dederint. Ideo concludit lex canonica apostolorum statuta sunt que dicunt: Nemo militans deo implicat se &c.<sup>o</sup>. Proinde aut <sup>xl. q. iij. c.<sup>o</sup>. Credo.</sup> clerici sint sine accionibus dominorum aut actores sine officio clericorum. Et universi dixerunt; hec observemus. Item ibidem sic scribitur hij qui in ecclesia domini ad ordinem promouentur clericorum, in nullo \*ab administracione divina <sup>[p. 59 MS.]</sup> auocentur, nec molestiis et negociis secularibus alligentur ut ab altaribus & sacrificiis recedant; set die ac nocte celestibus rebus et spiritualibus seruiant Item beatus petrus in epistola ad clementem sic scribit: Te quidem oportet irreprehensibilem <sup>xl. q. 1.<sup>o</sup>. c.<sup>o</sup> Te quidem.</sup> vivere, et summo studio niti ut omnes vite huius occupationes abicias. Non fide-iussor existas nec aduocatus licium fias, ne in ulla occupatione prorsus inueniaris mundialis negocii occasione perplexus. Neque enim iudicem neque cognitorem secularium negociacionum te ordinare vult christus, ne prefocatus presentibus hominum curis, non possis verbo dei vacare. Hec vero opera que minus tibi congruere diximus exhibeant sibi inuicem vacantes laici, et te nemo occupet ab hijs studiis per que salus datur hominibus &c.<sup>o</sup>. Item

[Decreti pars 1a.  
Dist. lxxxviii.  
cap. 4.]

\*[p. 596 MS.]

*gregorius* Romano defensori: *perlatum est*, inquit, ad nos reuerendissimum fratrem nostrum, basilium episcopum, velut vnum de laicis in causis secularibus \*occupari, et *pretorij*s inutiliter obseruire; que res quidem et ipsum vilem reddit, et reuerentiam sacerdotalem adnichilat. statim ut experientia tua hoc *preceptum* susceperit, ad reuertendum eum districta executione compellat, Quatenus te illic consistente quinque diebus sub qualibet excusatione immorari non liceat. Ne si quolibet modo eum ibidem amplius moram habere permiseris, cum ipso apud nos grauiter incipias esse culpabilis, &c.

Ista ad presens sufficiunt cum diligenti scripturarum excercitatione ad excitandum sacerdotes ne curis secularibus se subiciant; *et orationi*, studio et *predicationi* intendant, et sic, *spiritualibus inimicis* deuictis, soli deo placere studeant; ut cum ipso in celestibus regnare valeant; *prestante domino nostro ihesu christo*, qui cum patre et spiritu sancto vivit & regnat deus. Amen.

## XXVII.

## DE OFFICIO PASTORALI.

A LATIN tract under this title has been printed by Dr. Lechler.<sup>1</sup> The two are substantially the same, often answering to each other chapter for chapter. Each, however, contains chapters which are not in the other, while in details of treatment and in language they are independent. In this case, as in his defence of the Conclusions condemned in 1377, Wyclif has published his argument in two forms intended to appeal to different classes of readers; and we cannot doubt that, in this instance as in that, both forms were issued simultaneously or nearly so. Dr. Lechler in his preface dates the Latin tract not later than 1378, and his judgment is supported by the mention (p. 457) of Avignon as the residence of the Pope; since Gregory XI., the last of the Avignonese Pontiffs who was recognized in England, died March 27, 1378. This English version of the tract is much more vehement against the friars than the Latin; although even that, by the use of the phrase 'castra caymitica,' shows that Wyclif had already taken up a position of settled hostility to the Mendicant Orders.

Copied from the Ashburnham MS. MM.

<sup>1</sup> *Johannis de Wiclif Tractatus de Officio Pastoralis e codice Vindobonensi primum edidit Gotthardus Victor Lechler.* Lipsiæ, 1863.

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\*[p. 1 MS.]

## \*De officio pastoralis.

## [Capitulum primum.]

There are two offices in purging the Church :  
1. Of knights and lords, to defend the Church.

2. Of priests, to preach God's law.

Their fighting should be patience and suffering.

Two things belong to the office of spiritual shepherd ; holy life and sound teaching.

Qualities needed for the pastoral office,

which is the highest that Christ has ordained.

er ben two offiss þat fallen to purging of þe chirche. þe toon falliþ to knyztis & kyngis wiþ opere lordis, þat shulde defende wiþ strengþe þe lawe of crist in his boundis; & in þis seruyss þei holden of crist al þe lordchip þat þey han, & herfore þey shulden be war þat þey forfete not azenus þis lord. for ȝif þei ceessen of þis seruyss bi lesse tyme or more bi ony alouþe, god may not forȝete þis trespas but punysse it in his tyme; & bi þis cause ben lordchipis chaungid, nou encreessid & nou destried. þe toþer offiss to purge þe chirche falliþ to prestis, þat crist haþ ordeyned to telle generally his lawe to lordis & comyns what þey shulden do, & to stonde for goddis lawe to bodily deþ ȝif it be nede. & þus fȝiting of þes cristis knyztis stondiþ in paciense & passioun. & þus it is to saye shortly heere of þe offiss of goostly herde. þer ben two þingis þat fallen to þe offiss of þis herde, & þes ben hoolynesse of lif & hoolsumnesse of his lore. A curat shulde preche to þe puple treuþis of goddis lawe þat euere ben grene, for þanne he lediþ his sheep wel in hool pasture þat wole not rote; & for hoolynesse of lif techiþ rude men by groos ensaumple, it is nede-ful to þis herde & to his floc to lyue hoolily. & herfore seyen hooly doctours þat þe lif of þis herde is a bok to lewyd men, & a marke þat þei shulden sue affir. & herfore siþen crist is þe beste herde þat may not fayle in þis offiss, no cristenman shulde sue his prelate but in as myche as he sueþ crist. & þus an herde shulde passe in vertues his floc as þe herde passiþ his sheep, for he shulde be so sad in vertues & in suyng of þe firste herde þat neþer for coueytise ne fauours ne drede of deþ he shulde not fayle; for þis herdis offiss is þe hierste þat criste ȝyueþ to ony man. & þus þey moten lerne þe craft of loue, to loue crist bifore alle opere, & þanne a man

loueþ þus crist whanne he kepith wel his biddingis; & ellis he is not worþy to haue sicke a maystir, as þe gospel seiþ. & Matt. x. [37.] þus þis herde mut nedis knowe bileue, hope & charite. For þif he fayle in ony of þese he techiþ not wel his floc, \*ne [p. 15 MS.] puttiþ his lif for his sheep aþenus þe wolf whanne myster is.

[*Capitulum*] 2<sup>m</sup>.

s iþen a prest shulde be a mene bitwixe god & þe puple & teche þe puple þe wille of god, it is knowen þing bi Sin in a priest is worse than in other men. skile þat whanne he erriþ in þis offiss he sinneþ more þan oþere men; & þus synnede scarioth more þan oþere oomyn men. it is knowun bi bileue þat a man shulde not synne for to wyne al þis world, were it neuere so liȝt a synne; for ellis þis man synnede wel, & synnede not in synnyng þus. & þus a man shulde not synne al þif god bade hym synne, but god may not bidde man synne, as god hym silf may not synne. & aþen it mut nedis be synne to fayle fro suyng of crist, man shulde not fayle in þis suyt for god ne for ony creature. & it is knowun bi opyn skile þat it mut nedis be synne to fayle in suyng of crist for many resouns þer ben herof. for suyng of crist in vertues is so good þat it may not be yuel; and it is so liȝt a suyt þat no man is excuside bi noun power; & crist chees sicke a lif to teche men to sue hym, & no man may come to heuene but þif he sue crist on sum maner. & þus al synne of man-kynde stondiþ in defeaute of suyt of crist; & þus siþ eci cristenman haþ power of god to sue crist, he dissusiþ to myche his power þat vaiþ it not to sue þis lord. & heere men shulden be ware wiþ þe fend þat þey be not blyndid bi hym to seye who may be euene wiþ crist, & þus to allegge crist is but foly. þis is þe lewiderste fendis skile þat euere cam out of his leesingis; for men wolen not be euene wiþ crist ne go bifore hym as petre wolde, but sue crist neer or ferrere, & ellis þey moten go amys. & þis may ech man do oþer more ny; or ferrere. & þus summe gon bifore crist & summe contrarien hym in þer weye. þes men A man should not sin, even if (per impossible) God should bid him do so. It is sin to fall in following Christ. Every man has power to follow Christ. Men must not try to be even with Christ or go before him.

Men go before Christ who claim an ungrounded power, as in absolution.

Those men go contrary to Christ that do the opposite of his bidding.  
\*[p. 2 MS.]

gon bifore crist þat feynen hem an hid power for pride or for couetyse, alþif þis power be not groundid in crist, & þus don prelati nou-a-dayes in asoyling & priuylegies. & oþere men gon bifore crist þat trowen þat þey ben mouyd bi pite to stirs a man to do a dede, & ȝit it is aȝenus goddis wille; & þus it semyþ þat petre was mouyd to lette crist to die for men, & herfore was petre clepid satanas & bedun go bihynde crist; for no drede petre hadde be dampnyd ȝif he hadde not sorowid for þis synne. Þes men reuersen crist bi his godhed & his manhed þat han power of cristis godhed to do a þing vpon resoun, & ȝit þey letten to do it, doynge \*þe contrarie her-of. & siþen god is þe firste resoun many men in omisioun synne aȝenus crist, & þey moten nedis contrarie to hym. & þus men of þes newe ordri reuersen crist as satanas, for þey leuen þat crist biddiþ & don newe biddingis vnder his power.

### Capitulum 3<sup>m</sup>.

[1 Tim. vi. 8.]

Priests should be content to have food and raiment.

This rule is strictly binding.

Each must follow Christ, but none can come up to him.

o f þis goldun bileue shulden prestis take þis reule of crist þat poul ȝyueþ to tymothe, & in hym to alle cristen prestis: "hanyge fode & oþere þyngis bi whiche we ben skilefully keuerid, be we payed wiþ þes two," & do we werk þat prestis shulden do. for ech prest shulde sue crist bi þe power þat crist haþ ȝouyn hym; but ech prest may listly þus sue crist ȝif he lette not hym silf, & þus synne excusiþ hym not þat he synne not in þis noun suyt. & þus crist lyuede a comyn lif þat ech cristenman may sue, & noon of hem may be euene wiþ crist, for nedis cristis godhed mut be bifore. & þus ech cristenman may renne faste & he shal ay fynde crist bifore hym; be he pore, be he riche, be he feble, be he witty, he may not fayle in his good wille þat ne he shal sue crist in þat. & þus shal ech cristenman do, be he herde, be he sheep; but ȝif he take to be herde he shulde passe in witty suyng; & þis reule þat poul ȝyueþ mouyde apostlis & oþere prestis, til þat þe chirche of rome was dowid, to sue

crist in þe gospels pouert, & what þing þat a prest haþ more he haþ his meede heere but not in heuene. & þus poul vnderstandiþ bi fode, mete & drynk þat ben couenable to do betere þe seruyss of god; & not lustly deynteess of prestis, neþer to make þer body wantoun, ne gete hem worchip in ouer-greet meyne. two maner of hiling ben nedeful to prestis þat shulden do þis offiss; hiling of resonable cloþis, & eke hiling of skileful housis. but be war heere þat synne of curatis brouȝt in bi custom in þes two be not cause of þy synne to spende to myche in oþer of hem. & siþen we shulden be pilgryms heere & rowe wisely in þis boot to heuene, ȝif we passen þis fode & hiling we chargen vs silf wiþ-ouȝt fruyt. & þus prestis shulden be war þat coueytise ouer þis reule of crist lette not prestis to holde poulis reule, for þanne þey synne in auerise. & þus prestis may bi þre enemyes be temptid to breke þis apostlis reule; bi þer fleys, & bi þe world, & bi pride of þe fend. þat prest þat fedid \*hym silf to lustfully to plesse his fleys mut passe resoun in his dispensis; & þat bringiþ in robbing of curatis. & þat prest synneþ bi þe world þat passiþ þis reule in to greet meyne or in to costly dispensis, & seiþ þe world nedid herto. he synneþ bi tempting of þe fend, þat bi pride or worldly worchip coueytiþ more of sicche godis þan resoun axiþ to his offiss. & þus onest pouert is best, moost sure, & moost liȝt to prestis heere; & bi þis cause crist helde þis meene bitwixe begging & worldly richees. & heere ben þre excusaciouns þat ben seyð to excuse prestis synne. summe seyen þat for worldly worchip þey moten passe þis reule of poul; & þus þei desiren more worldly worchip þan worchip of heuene in staat of blis bi þe holding of goddis reule. but where is more foly of man? þe secound excusacioun of synne seiþ þat prestis moten do bodily almes, & algatis helpe folc of þer kynd. but þis telliþ an opyn blaasemye, þat crist was vnwiss in þis, siþ he vside not þis in word ne dede, for goostly almes is myche betere þan deling of þis worldly drit. þe þridde excusacioun of prestis is þat þey moten nedis gedere godis for sekenesse & eelde

'Food' does not include dainties.

Balment includes the shelter of a house.

We should be pilgrims here, and row in this boat to heaven.

Three temptations to break the Apostle's rule:

[p. 25 MS.] the flesh, by feeding too lustfully;

the world, by living with too much pomp;

the devil, by pride moving to covetousness.

Three excuses:

1. Winning of worldly honour.

2. Need of money for almsgiving.

3. Provision for sickness or time of need.

& opere caassis to helpe hem in tyme of nede. þis is aȝenæs þe lore of crist, to triste in help of worldly muc, & leene to triste in god almyȝti for keping of his comaundementis.

### Capitulum 4<sup>m</sup>.

Antiochrist argues that by this reason kings and lords should give up their wealth.

ut heere antiochrist argueþ aȝenæs þis lawe of god þat bi þis same skile lordis þat lyuen worldlily shulden holde hem payed of þer fode & þer hiling, but where were þanne þer lordchip & þer tresour to helpe reumes?

God has ordained diverse members of Holy Church, and made things for their use.

many siche ape resouns han men herd aȝenæs crist, as ȝif an ape wolde argue þus: "a mannes eye is in his hed of sutil fode & vnhilid, bi þe same skile shulde his foot." þis fend mut lerne arguyng, & wite to what ende god haþ ordeyned dyuerse lemes of hooly chirche, & þeraftir shapen hem godis prestis shulden be in þe hierste staat, & sue crist in sure pouert.

Riches not needful to priest's office.  
\*[p. 3 MS.]

kyngis & lordis shulden be byneþe & shewe þe godhed of crist; & so hem falliþ to þer offyss to haue lordchip & worldly richees, & bi þis shulden þey shewe cristis power in his godhed. & cristis prestis shulden be pore & pacient bi cristis manhed. But hou ben worldly godis nedeful to kepe siche offis of \*prestis? clerkis shulden shame of siche resouns,

Worldly power and riches require work unsuited to priests.

& algatis hou þey passen crist in taking of worldly lordchipsis & hauyng of erpely tresour, þat shulden be proper to worldly men. crist wolde not in his persone ne in his apostlis haue siche richeessis, but kepte lordchipsis & worldly godis to kyngis & lordis of þis world; & certis þese axen bodily trauel & myȝti defense of goddis lawe þat shulden not acorde to prestis;

God gave them that lords might serve him in defence of his law.

wherfore shulden þei haue þes godis? & so worldly lordis shulden knowe wherfore god ȝaf hem þes godis, & serue god bi þes godis in myȝti defending of his lawe; for wite þey wel þat for þis defaute may þey be blamed of þis cheef lord. prestis shulden not lette þis ordenaunce, but helpe þat it were kept of þe chirohe; for so dide crist in word & dede, why shulden not his prestis do so? auerous gederung of tresour is to blame in ech staat.

ȝit argueþ anticrist aȝenus þis lawe þat poul haþ teld;  
 apostlis as þei weren tauȝt of god chesiden to hem seuene  
 dekenes to serue folc at þer mete & to do bodily almes. Why  
 shulden not preſtis do so, siþen þei kunnen wiſeliere do þis?  
 but heere men seyen as bifore þat þis smacchiþ an ape skile:  
 for we graunten to þes spekeris þat boþe lowere preſtis &  
 dekenes may serue trewe men & pore in departing of mete to  
 hem; but þey shulen not bi þis offiss leue ay to preche  
 cristis gospel. & so men shulden take heere good hede hou  
 apostlis gederide not þes godis, but seculeris puttiden hem at  
 þer feet; & ȝit þei leſten not to preche for departing of þes  
 godis. & þus a clerk or spenser of a curat may parte þes  
 godis in þe name of hym. what lewid skile shulde mone of  
 þis þat preſtis shulden be seculer lordis, or haue worldly godis  
 in propre, siþen apostlis kepten hem fro þes two. & heere  
 men answeren to þe þridde skile þat anticrist makiþ heere;  
 poul techiþ hou þat bishops shulden ordeyne wel for þer hous  
 & herbore men wiþ-oute grucching, but herto þei moten haue  
 wherof ouer þer fode & þer hiling. We graunten wel þat  
 siche bishops as ben keperis of parischis shulden wel ordeyne  
 for her housis boþe in preſtis & oþer meyne, so þat þey  
 hadden not to manye ne to ydil ne to synful. & siþen þey  
 shulden haue ynow boþe of fode & of hiling, þey shulden not  
 euers be so nedy þat ne þey myȝten helpe pore pilgryms. but  
 heere þei hadden need to be war of herborings \*of stronge  
 beggeris & of myȝti men of þe world to haue heere þank of  
 worldly manhed. þey shulden kepe pore pilgryms for tyme  
 þat þei hadden wher-of, & fede hem bi apostlis fode & not bi  
 deyntees for worldly worchip. & þis shulde teche siche  
 persones to take more hede to þer paryshis to fede her soulis  
 goostly, al ȝif þey shulden do þis sumtyme. & þis were  
 litil charite in persouns to spare hem silf for a nyȝt for to  
 helpe þer euene cristen, whanne þey sawen þat þei hadden  
 nede; & algatis to take siche gestis þat helden hem payed  
 wiþ siche godis, & weren of þe noumbre of hem þat poul  
 biddiþ to holde hem payed.

The apostles ap-  
 pointed deacons  
 to distribute  
 alms.  
 Acts [vi.]

The goods were  
 laid at the  
 apostles' feet.

A curate may em-  
 ploy his 'spenser'  
 to distribute  
 alms.

To the argument  
 that bishops  
 should be given  
 to hospitality,

we say that they  
 should have  
 enough to help  
 poor pilgrims,  
 \* [p. 36 MS.]

but not to enter-  
 tain merely for  
 worldly credit.

Capitulum 5<sup>m</sup>.

Pastors should o  
live on the alms  
of their flock.

Christ lived on  
alms.  
Luke viii. [3.]

Why should a  
prelate shame to  
do likewise?

To live on alms is  
the most perfect  
life;

it avoids strife  
and cursing.

In teaching their  
flocks they give  
more than they  
receive.

Acts xx. [35.]

It makes the  
flock contribute  
of free will,

[Philemon v. 15.]  
[p. 4 MS.]  
and is a spur for  
good to the pre-  
lates.

God will have  
men deal only in  
things that can  
be valued.

f þis may men se ouer þat alle herdis of crist shulden lyue  
of þe almes of sheep þat þey techen. for ȝif þey han rentis  
bifore or worldly richees, þei shulden leese hem bifore  
or lyue on hem bi-syde þer sheep. & þus apostlis leften þer  
godis whanne þey weren chosun to cristis disciplis. for ech  
persoun shulde bi charite sue crist as lichy as he myȝte, but  
crist lyuede of almes of þe puple þat he tauȝte; why shulde  
a prelat shame to lyue þus on siche almes? þe gospel of luk  
seiþ hou marye maudelen & cusees wif & many oþere mynys-  
triden to crist of þe godis þat weren herne; & þus as crist  
was nedy for men, so he wolde take of þer almes; hou shulde  
a prelat shame to take þus godis of pore men? Also ech  
prelat shulde lyue moost parfit lif & moost sikire, but it is  
more parfit & sikire to lyue on siche almes þan bi ony oþer  
maner, & þerfore prelatis shulden mekely holde hem payed of  
þis title. ȝif þei hadden bi anticristis lawe weye to plete for  
þes godis, þey wolden stryue & curse for hem & wrongly  
disturble þer sugetis, & þus to haue bi title of almes as crist  
hadde is more worshipful, for lawe of þe lord is betere, & þus  
prestis ben more lik to crist. & þus prelatis shulden bi title  
of almes ȝyue lore & leding to þer sugetis; & siþen þis ȝyuyng  
is myche betere þan bodily ȝyuyng þat þe puple ȝyueþ, it is  
more worshipful to prelatis to ȝyue þus goostly almes þan to  
take bodily almes, þat is so litil & so myche dette, & herfore  
seiþ poul sopely þat it is more blessid condicioun for to ȝyue  
betere þing þan to take þing lesse worþ. & þus ȝif title of  
almes renne bi-twixe þis herde & his sheep, it is more willeful  
to þes sheep & so more meedeful to hem, & herfore wolde  
poul take willefully þe ȝifte þat philemon shulde \*ȝyue hym.  
& on þe toþer syde anentis þe herde it turneþ hym to more  
mekenesse, & stirij hym by skyle & shame to ȝyue aȝen betere  
ȝifte. Also god is so skileful þat he wole not þat men  
chaffere but in þingis whoos valu þei knowen; but lore &



preyours of prestis may not be taxid bi mannus wit, & perfore Teaching and prayer have no price. god wolde not þat it were sold bi dymes ne offeringis. & perfore seiþ crist in matheus gospel to his disciplis þat techen Matt. x. [8.] þe puple: "þee token frely yours wit of god, & yyue þee it frely to þe puple." & þis sentense shulden prestis take as a reule of bileue, for myche wit & myche strengþe ben in goddis reules þat semen rude.

### Capitulum 6<sup>m</sup>.

o f þis it semyþ to many men þat neþer persoun ne prelat shulde wringe out þe godis of his sugetis bi cursis ne Priests should not curse or go to law for money. worldly ple. for þey ben pure almes as we supposen, on which almes shulde renne no ple; for þei shulden be willeful & þouyn wiþ-oute resoun of mannus dette. Also crist & his Christ and his apostles never did this. apostlis neþer cursiden ne pletiden for þer dette, & þey shulden be ensauple to vs; why shulden we curse or plete for hem? & in tokene here-of god telde in his newe lawe litil or nouȝt Little or nothing said of tithes in New Testament. of yyuyng of dymes. & it semyþ to trewe men þat god wolde þat dymes weren partid bi-twixe prestis & opere pore men þat weren feble, lame or blynd. & therefore telliþ luk in his Luke ix. Christ and the Samaritans. gospel hou crist cam þoru; samary wiþ his disciplis, & þey wolden neþer yyue fode ne herbore for hym & hise; & ioon & iames axiden of crist þat fier shulde come down fro heuene & destrie hem, as ely dide; but crist answeride to þes apostlis & tauȝte þat he wolde not curse þus: "þee witen not," seiþ crist, "whoos spiritis þee ben, & hou y loue mekenesse & paciense; for mannus sone cam not in-to þis world to lese mennus soulis but to saue hem." & iuridiccious of crist was largere & freere þan þe popis. siþen crist wolde not curse for þes wrongis, & þei weren more þan oure wrongis, bi what lawe shulden we haue title to curse þus for oure lesse wrongis? no drede crist hadde more riȝt to þes dymes þan ony cristenman may haue to dymes or to offeringis or to ony good by mannus lawe; & siþen crist tauȝte in þis dede not to plete for Our wrongs less than Christ's.

his dette, why shulden not prestis sue crist heere, siþen cristis dedis ben myrour to hem ?

\*[P. 40 MS.]

Tithes were due to priests in the old law, but they had to work in return.

We should not go to law except out of charity.

A priest to move his flock to provide for him by patience and good life.

& ȝif þey taken of þe olde lawe þat dymes ben \* due vn-to prestis, myche more in þe newe lawe whanne prestis ben more worþy bi crist. soþ it is þat dymes weren due to prestis in þe olde lawe, but þey weren holdun to do aȝen sleying of beestis & hard seruyss. but god forbode þat oure prelatis oblische hem to trauele þus, for þanne þei abiden aȝenus bileue, sleying of crist þat was þanne figurid.

Also no man shulde plete an oþer, & algatis þe curat his sheep, but for charite to þe pleted man; siþen poul seiþ þat alle oure dedis shulden be don in charite, ȝe þat shulde strecche to oure enemyes. & ȝif þou seyst þat charite moueþ þee to plete þus for dymes, forȝyue þou hem as crist dide; for þat is more liȝt & of more loue. & ȝif a man plete in goddis cause & alegge þat þou hast synned in doying of þyn herdis offiss, in þingis þat þou shuldist ȝyue þi sheep; no drede þou maist not answers heere ne iustefie þy part bi goddis lawe. & þus in þe newe lawe siþen prestis bi-gunnen to plete þus, þei han left to do þer offiss, as þei leften in þe olde lawe; & so in-stode of siche ples þe curat shulde moue his sheep bi paciense & oþere vertues & trewe trauel in his offiss. & ȝif þis wole not moue þe puple to ȝyue hym þingis þat ben nedeful, turne þis prelat to oþer puple; for so dide crist, & god failiþ not; or ellis lyue he on his bodily trauel or oþere mennus almes as poul dide.

### Capitulum 7<sup>m</sup>.

If a prelate bid a o parson to collect money wrongfully, the parson must refuse,

or he assents to wrong.

f þis ground may men se ouer, þat ȝif an hye prelat charge a persoun to ȝyue hym godis þat is not groundid bi lawe of god for to ȝyue, þys persoun shulde not ȝyue þes godis, neþer for cursing ne oþere censuris. for a man shulde not assente to synne for noþing as it is seyð; & no drede þis persoun assentide to þe wrong of his prelat aboue, whanne he ȝyueþ

þus pore mennus godis bi ȝifte þat goddis lawe techiþ not. for al treuþe is in goddis lawe, & dettis feyned wiþ-outen it ben pure robbery of þe puple; but who shulde not aȝen-stonde þis? & it is all oon to an hye prelat to curse þis persoun for þis cause & to seye: "robbe þou pore men, & take of hem so myche good, & y shal mayntene þi robbery, & ellis y shal curse þee in þyn hed & suspende þee & þe puple þat þey here not goddis seruys." Who wolde not fle fro siche spuyling for siche feyned censuris of prelatis? but heere haþ þe fend shapun a sharp cautel to strengþen þis robbery. þey wolen bi process of þer lawe priue a man of his benefiss & putte in an-oþer fend þat wole blely robbe pore men & þus ȝyue þis robbery to þis prelat of anticrist. & þis astonyeþ many persouns to stonde for riȝt aȝenus þe fend. but heere shulden alle þre \*partis of þe chirche helpe ech oþer aȝenus þe deuel, & wite wel first þat suche cursing or censuris ben vnskilful; & so men shulden quenche hem siþ þei ben aȝenus goddis lawe. & trewe persouns wiþ þer pariȝschis shulden not lette for siche manass to stonde algatis for þis treuþe, neþer for dispensis ne payne; for siþen persouns shulden haue no godis to ȝyue þer prelatis but of þer sheep, what persoun shulde for al þis world make þis robbing of pore men? & ȝif manye wolden holde togedere in þis bileue aȝenus þe fend, it were a triacle aȝenus venym þat emperour prelatis sowen in þe folc. for no drede neþer persouns ne puple shulden assente herto for ony man. & þanne bischops & archidekenes wiþ þer officialȝ & denes shulden not amersy pore men; for þis is worse þan comyn robberye, siþen ipocrisie is feyned ouer wrong-taking of þes godis. a prest shulde raþers leue þis offis & suffers deþ or he assentide by ony of sixe maner of consentis to siche piling of pore men. for it is in many caasis as myche synne to rob a wedewe or a pore fadirles child of a peny or an halpeny as it were to robbe a riche man of an hundrid markis worþ godis. & no drede siche cowarde prestis ben cause of al siche spuyling; & it is shewid by þis þefte þat þei louen more þer shepis godis þan þey don heelp of þer soule, & þanne þay

A prelate might as well bid him go rob at once.

Good men are deprived, and the benefices given to robbers.

\*(p. 5 MS.) All three parts of the Church should join to resist this, and disregard curses and censures.

Archdeacons fine poor men.

Six ways of consent.

faylen of gode herdys, & ben hirid hynes or woluyes, & þe puple shulde crye out on siche.

### Capitulum 8<sup>m</sup>.

Parishioners  
should withdraw  
tithes from priests  
that fail in their  
office.

To pay them is  
assenting to sin.

2 John [10].

We are not to  
greet an evilman,  
much less give  
him alms.

Analogy from  
Canon Law.

\*[p. 55 MS.]

[1 Cor. v. 11.]

In giving goods  
to bad priests you  
help them to do  
harm.

The devil says  
people may not  
judge their pre-  
lates.

cristenmen of þis ground þenken þat parijschens shulden drawe fro persouns offeringis & dymes & opere godis whanne þey faylen opynly in þer offiss, for siche assent is to blame þat nurship persouns in siche synne. but what meede were it to parijschens to ȝyue her almes to siche a prelat to werre aȝenus crist & his chirche & mayntene þe fendis part aȝenus crist? siþen crist haþ tauȝt cristenmen hou þey shulden wisely do þer almes; not aȝenus þer oune hed, ne aȝenus þer modir hooly chirche. Also bileue in ioons epistle techiþ þat men shulden not grete siche; but it is more to ȝyue hem almes þan to grete hem bi nakid word; myche more men shulden not grete hem wiþ almes, but fle fro hem as fro false prophetis. Also þe popis lawe biddiþ men to not here þe massis of prestis þat ben comyn lechours. Þanne ȝif prestis ben in more synne þat is more knowun to þe puple, þey shulden not take þes prestis seruyss; hou shulden þey herfore ȝyue hem almes? Also poul \*biddiþ drawe men to dele not wiþ siche men þat ben contrarie to goddis lawe, but sich prestis ben contrarie to god & to his puple as wolues of rauelyn; hou shulden men þanne ȝyue hem godis to peruerte so myche puple? for what euere þei don, in masse or mateyns or opere dedis of þer lif, þey harmen hem silf & þer parijs & opere puple<sup>1</sup> þat is aboute hem. & bi þe same skile [they are] foolis þat ȝyuen þer godis as almes to siche prelatis; for siche ȝifte is not almes but ȝifte of helle to strengþe þe fend. & þe fend shulde shame heere to seye þat parijschens shulden not iuge of þe lif of þer prelat wheþer þat he be good or yuel; for þey shulden iuge to sue hym in as myche as he sueþ crist. & þus siþ crist biddiþ

<sup>1</sup> MS. pupple.

iuge his werkis, why shulden not men iuge & fle false prelatis? it is al oon to seye þis feynnyng & to lette men to fle fro fendis & blesse hem fro þer wickid werkis, but teche men to assente to hem. lord, siþ crist biddiþ men þat þey shulden not trowe to hym but ȝif he hide his fadirs werkis, what priuylegie haþ anticrist heere þat men shulden trowe & susteyne hym in doying of þe deuels werkis? Also crist techiþ in þe gospel þat ȝif salt vanysche away it is not worþ aftir but to be castun out & be defoulid of men; & þis salt shulde be þes prelatis. lord, wher þis casting out & þis defouling þat crist spekiþ of be ȝuyung of godis to siche curatis, & mayntenynge of hem in þis staat. lord, siþen men doren not mayntene an opyn traytour of þe kyng, hou doren þey mayntene a more traytour & more harmful of ihesu crist? þe harme þat wolde sue of þis lore semyþ to stonde in þis good, þat prestis shulden shewe bi þer werkis þat þey weren worþy to be helpid; but þis lore is tauȝt of crist, & blessid be þe weye þat techiþ it. ȝif men iugen vndiscretly þey don hem more harm þan prestis, for laste prestis in vortuous lif & drede þey not of sustenaunse.

Christ tells us not to believe in him unless he does his father's works.

Matt. v. [13.]

They are the salt that has lost his savour.

If men judge wrongly, they do more harm to themselves than to the priest.

### Capitulum 9<sup>m</sup>.

þ is sentense of almes shulde streoche to plasis þat han chirchis appropriid; as ben munkis & chanouns & seculer collegies. þer ben þre maner of collegies þat vsen þis craft of appropriing. þe firste ben cathedral chirchis þat han prouendris appropriid to hem; þe secounde ben chapels of prinsis þat han chirchis more appropriid; þe þridde ben collegies of studies þat vsen þis same craft; bi þes may men knowe opere þat han appropriing of chirchis. For alle acorden in þis, þat þey han almes of pariȝschens & \*ȝit dwellen not on þe pariȝsch as herdis for to teche hem; & þey blasfemen in god. for þey moten nedis seye þat god ordeynede þis; & siþ no cause is of þis almes, þei seyen þat god shoop þis wiþ-oute cause. Also

Appropriations to colleges.

Different kinds of colleges.

All agree in taking alms and not residing.  
\*[p. 6 MS.]

god haþ ordeyned heere in erþe almes to be delid as he deliþ  
reyn; but he deliþ reyn as it is nede, bi smalle dropis where  
erþe is drye; hou shameþ not anticrist heere to make siche  
dichis & waste drye erþe? no drede he is an yuel god, þat

They say that  
they pray for  
their parishioners  
and so profit  
them.  
Their prayer is  
worth little.

þus reuersiþ goddis ordeynaunse. & ȝif siche collegies feynen  
þat þey prayen & oþere weyes profiten to þer pariȝschis, men  
shulden not þus chaffere wiþ prayere; for þey witen nere wher  
þey ben dampnyd. & prayour of siche fendis is litil worþ, ȝe  
to hemsilf, hou feden þey sheep? Also almes shulde be fre  
& discreet as goddis lawe techiþ, for ellis it were not meedeful,

Why should a  
poor man have  
his money taken  
to support a  
'Cain's castle'?

& god ȝaue no leeuē to do it; what meede shal a pore man  
haue þat he sufferiþ aȝenus his wille his almes be borun to  
cayms castel to fede a floce of anticristis? certis þey don þes  
pariȝschis no good ne to general hooly chirche, but ȝif þei don  
good as þe fend þat reuersiþ goddis ordenaunse. men shulden  
seke ground of siche collegies, wheþer god haþ ordeyned hem  
to be, & þe floce fed bi hem þat ben so fer & so lewid. & þus

These colleges  
want to find  
another way to  
heaven than  
Christ's.

þes nouelries of collegies semen to tempte crist as þe fend,  
for þey gon not to heuene bi greesis þat god haþ ordeyned  
to lede þidur, but þey wolen fle bi þe fendis craft &  
leue þe weye þat crist haþ set. crist ordeynede þat  
his herdis shulden dwelle wisely vpon his sheep, & teche  
hem boþe bi lif & word hou þey shulden lyue to come to

Christ bade his  
shepherds live  
among their sheep  
and teach them;

heuene; but anticrist castiþ an-oþer gile, þat his herdis  
dwelle afer in castels & be dounp of lore of lif & lore of word  
to helpe þer sheep, & so it is nedeful þat þe puple be dis-  
seyued in body & soule. þey ben disseyued in þer body, for  
þei ben robbid of bodili good & it is clepid almes bi ipocrisie.  
& þus þey ben goostly disseyued, boþe for hem wantiþ teching  
to wende to heuene bi cristis weye, & for þey ben led to helle  
bi errour of þe fendis weye. crist seiþ þat he is weye,  
& grounde þou þis apropring in crist, for ȝif crist grounde it  
not, it is þe brode weye to helle; it is a newe foundun weye

Antichrist tells  
them to live afar  
and not teach.

\*[p. 66 MS.]

\*for sutilte aȝenus charite, but þe kyngis weye is crist þat  
lediþ surely to heuene.

*Capitulum 10<sup>m</sup>.*

A nt þus seyn *summen* heere þat, as lordis of þe world shulden wiþdrawe þer lordchip fro clerkis dowid *æenus* goddis lawe, so comyns of þe parijs shulden wiþdrawe þer almes & ȝyue it aftir þe lore of crist, for ellis þey reu<sup>er</sup>siden crist & dispisiden hym & chosun þe fend. & ȝif a prelat, as pope or bishop, streyne þe puple *æenus* þer wille to ȝyue þer almes to sicke plasis, certis þei ben þe fendis proctours. for crist koude neuere make an almes þing þat were not willeful to men & he koude not ordeyne sicke buschementis to robbe men & to wounde hem. þes men ben woundid in soule þat ben smytun wiþ errour of vertues; & þus can anticrist bi many mylis sende his arowis to wounde þe puple, & moue conscience of men þat þey leue goddis lore & take þe lore þat þe pope biddiþ, as ȝif þe pope were hyed ouer crist. for crist biddiþ men þus to do almes to pore feble & lame & blynd, but anticrist biddiþ to leue þis, and to do it to stronge & idil men, þat ben nurschid in þe fendis nest to be an oost *æenus* crist. Also pride & coueytise of myȝti men of þe world weren ground of sicke nestis wiþouten autorite of crist; & þus men moten nedis assente to þe fend *æenus* crist þat assenten to sicke propring of chirchis bisyde cristis leue, for crist seiþ þat who so is not wiþ hym he mut nedis be *æenus* hym. & þus coueytise of popis & bishops assentiþ to sicke appropriingis, & coueytise of þer messangeres þat ben hirid to helpe hem; & pride of men of þe world þat wolen make hem sicke poondis, is an oþer rote of consense *æenus* crist lord of þis world. but ech man shulde þenke wisely þat his oune synne is to myche, al ȝif he procure not to be parsener of oþere mennus synnes bi consent. & þis consent of myȝti men bi strengþe & cautels of þe fend haþ maistry of pore sheep of crist, & autorisiþ sicke wrongis in erþe. Also crist techiþ in þe pater noster to preye god to ȝyue vs oure breed, & it shulde be maad oure breed bi oure trewe seruyss þat god

Commons should withdraw their alms from priests wrongly endowed.

Christ bids men do alms to the poor and weak,

Antichrist to strong idlers.

Men should think it enough to answer for their own sins, without sharing other people's.

We must make 'our daily bread' ours by true service.

These men doing  
no service make  
their prayers in  
vain.

[2 Thess. iii. 10.]

\*[p. 7 MS.]  
One hidden error  
brings in more  
and worse.

biddiþ; but al þes þat han chirchis aproprid faylen of þis trewe seruyss herfore, & þus þei ben vnhabile to praye, but prayen aȝen þer oune hed. & to þis purpos spekiþ poul, þat þis man þat traueliþ not ete he not; for ȝif he dide, he eet as a priue þef mete of opere pore men. siche sutiltees of priue resouns þat ben hid in goddis lawe shulden moue men on goddis syde to holde cristis ordenaunse in his boundis; for certis a priuey errour & an hid wole bringe in \*a grettere errour, as o defaute þat is contynued wolle bringe in a more defaute. as defaute of keping of o pariþs wole turne hem to þe fendis children, & þey wolen infecte cuntreys, & cuntreys wolen infecte reumes; & þus it falliþ to kyngis & bischops to stoppe þis errour for more perel.

### Capitulum 11<sup>m</sup>.

Men think that  
they may do as  
they will with  
their own.  
How can they  
give better than  
as the Pope tells  
them?

Everyman should  
learn inwardly  
from God the  
great articles of  
belief.

We cannot know  
who is a member  
of the true  
Church, but we  
may guess.

b ut heere moueþ þe fend men to feyne falsly aȝenus treuþe. many men taken as bileue þat þei ben lordis of þer oune godis, & þanne it is leeneþul to hem to do þer almes where ouers þey wolen. but where shulden þey do þer almes but to ȝyue þer dymes & þer offeringis, & to siche curatis þat þe pope & bischops lymiten hem, for ellis myȝte a man be dampnyd wiþ-outen ony defaute of hym; for hou shulde a lewid man do but as his prelat techiþ hym?

Heere men seyn bi goddis lore þat ech man þat haþ discrecioun shulde be tauȝt wiþ-ȝanne bi god of grete articlis of bileue; but oon article of bileue next aftir þe hooly goost is to trowe hooly chirche þat is cristis spouse & oure modir. & þis is a foul errour to take þe spouse of þe fend & worchipe here as cristis spouse boþe in word & in dede. we may not ȝit wite for certeyn which persone is of cristis spouse of alle þe men þat wandren heere, but we may gesse & þat is ynow. As we gessen þat þis man þat holdiþ wel cristis lawe is a leme of hooly chirche, þe which chirche is oure modir, So we gessen of an-opere man þat reuersiþ cristis lawe, þat he is a leme of þe fend & no part of hooly chirche; & we shulden



not ȝyue dymes ne offeringis to sicke men as to hooly chirche,  
 as we shulden not loute þe fend al ȝif he shewide hym in  
 ymage of crist. & herfore crist & his apostlis weren not  
 gredy of worldly godis, but helden hem payed of fode &  
 hiling, & so don prestis of cristis chirche. & þus siþ crist is  
 cheef lord, men moten dispende cristis godis on þat maner þat  
 crist haþ lymtyed, & not hou euere a man wole, & it is not  
 ynow to do good but ȝif a man do it wel. for þe gospel of  
 ioon telliþ þat crist seiþ of summe foolis þat þei shulden deme  
 to obesche to god in pur-suyng of his apostlis; as poul wente  
 þat he dide wel to drawe cristenmen to ierusalem. & þus it  
 is ny; þe perel to ȝyue bodily almes to men but ȝif men  
 knowen hem betere, & þanne in litil quantite. & herfore  
 crist tauȝte not his apostlis to bisie hem aboute sicke almes  
 but aboute goostly almes, þat is preching of þe gospel; but  
 bodily almes is brouȝt yn bi freris & oþere stronge beggeres.  
 & þes fendis clerkis feynen almes whanne it is noon almes but  
 synne. & þus errour in bileue, to trowe to þe pope & to  
 bischops as men shulden trowe goddis lawe, makiþ many  
 men blamed of god. for men shulden trowe to þes prelatiſ  
 aftir þer dedis groundid in goddis lawe; but men shulden  
 trowe to cristis lawe ouer þis as bileue. but ȝit þe fend  
 disseyueþ men þat þey ȝyuen not þis almes vnto ioon or to  
 robert, but to god & in his name bi good entent, & þat is  
 ynow; for a man shulde paye his dette to hym þat is traytour  
 to god. Heere is myche for to seye, for þe fend takiþ fals  
 þat foolis ȝyuen not þer almes to robert þat is a leme of þe  
 fend. & ȝif þei ȝyuen þis þus to god, þei ȝyuen it on an yuel  
 maner; but men witen þat it is dampnable to ȝyue to god þer  
 seruyss yuele as ech fend þat is in helle ȝyueþ to god his  
 dampnyng. & þus men moten riȝte þer entent, & ȝyue  
 discretly goddis godis, for wenyng to do wel in many caasis  
 is not ynow. & as anentis worldly dette þer is an-oþer resoun  
 þer-of; for a man may meedefully ȝyue it to hym þat shal  
 aftir be dampnyd; for þis is no willeful almes but ȝilding of  
 dette bi mannis lawe.

We must spend  
 the goods, of  
 which Christ is  
 chief lord, as he  
 has ordered.

It is not enough  
 to mean to do  
 right.

[John xvi. 2.]  
 So did Paul when  
 he persecuted.

[p. 76 MS.]

The fend says  
 that men give  
 their almes to God,  
 not to John or  
 Robert,

and that debts  
 must be paid  
 to bad men.

Men must not do  
 an evil service to  
 God.

Paying debts  
 stands on another  
 footing.

Capitulum 12<sup>m</sup>.

Curates think ;  
that the Pope's  
leave or privileges  
may excuse them  
from residence.

God will have  
due service.

The Pope's bulls  
can only make  
him take a share  
in the damnation.

\*[p. 8 MS.]

Priests ought to  
tell lords sharply  
of their duty in  
this matter.

The fænd says  
that it is enough  
to put in a vicar.

It were good to  
have a vicar to  
take the forfeited  
alms.

it þe fend blyndiþ many curatis þat wenen þat þei ben not  
holdun to residense bi leue of þe pope or of þer bischop or  
of seculere lordis bi priuylegie, & þus þei taken fruytis of  
þer chirchis & seruen not þer puple þerfore. but heere trewe  
men shulden knowe þat neþer pope ne oþer man haþ power to  
kepe a man in his benefis & to do nouȝt þerfore; for god wole  
not do þis dede but axiþ due seruyss for þis offis. & as an  
ymage is not þe man al ȝif it be lik to hym, so siche leue of  
a persoun makith hym not herde but wolf to god; & ȝif an  
herde haue bullis of þe pope þat he dispensiþ heere wiþ hym,  
alle siche bullis excusen not bifore þe iugement of god; but  
þey accusen more þe pope to take part of mennus dampnyng  
þat tristen so myche in þe popis bullis more þan in lawe or  
skile of god. & bi þe same skile bischops leue, þat is of a  
persoun, excusiþ hem not bifore god, but te[lliþ]<sup>1</sup> hou þey  
bien & sillen þer peyne; þis chaffere pas[sib]<sup>1</sup> symonye, for it  
is more nyȝ to wrong to ȝyue a man leue for money to serue  
not god but to serue þe fend. For certis no man may haue  
þis power, \*þe not anticrist hym silf. & as anentis seculer  
lordis, as kyngis & prinsis & oþere lordis, men shulden sharply  
telle to hem þat þei han no power aȝenus god, but þei moten  
nedis for siche dedis þat men clepen priuelegies dampne  
hem silf, wiþ þes persouns þat þey letten fro goddis offis.  
& wolde god þat trewe prestis wolden telle sharply þis perel  
to lordis; for man myȝte not more opynly bicomme traytour to  
his god þan to drawe his knyȝtes fro his seruyss, & bringe in  
fendis & sle his soulis. but ȝit þe fend haþ founȝden cautels  
to bringe in vikeris in persouns stede, & bi colour of siche  
vikeris he seiþ þat propring of chirchis is leueful, & nouȝ  
residense is excusid bi siche a viker þat holdiþ his stede.  
Heere men þenken þat it were good to haue a viker þat were  
nedy to take bodily almes of men whanne þe persoun trauelide

<sup>1</sup> Illegible from the margin being rubbed.

not þerfore; but þey ben not in þis þer vikeris, but in bodily trauel & spuyling of men. but boþe þis persoun & þis viker moten be punysshid for þer trespas, siþ ech man is holdun to serue god bi al þe power þat he haþ; for ȝif þis viker myȝte serue ynow, what nede were it of sicke a persoun? certis but to spuyle þe pore folc, & make more synne in hooly chiroche. & bringing in of sicke vikeris, þat oftetye ben vnhabile herdis, makij hem pore & nedy, & sharpij hem to spuyle pore puple; & it makij persouns aboute more hardy to walowe in synne, & many tymes þei ben vnhabile to haue trewely þe name of curat. & sicke false names þat ben þus feyned excusen not bifore crist, siþ crist is þe firste treuþe & þe firste resoun of alle þingis. We graunte wel þat it were good many prestis to haue felowis in keping of a floce, oon to do o þing, an-oþer an-oþer; as oon to trauele bodily in mynistring of sacramentis, an-oþer to trauele in preching & oþer teching of þe puple; but loke þat þes boþe be hooly & lyue in pouert as apostlis diden & ech of hem helpe mekely oþer as felowis drawinge in goddis ȝoc. but þis axij residence on sheep þat man is herde of. god may not be bigilid bi sicke names & excusing, for þis lord wole rikene wiþ þes seruauantis fully aftir þat resoun axij. ȝif þou feynest þee an ordre þat þou preyest & þenkist on god, & þerwiþ þou hast cure bi þy viker þat kepij þe chiroche, loke þat þou bere not falsly þe name, but lyue in pouert as baptist dide, not in hye castels of caym & lustful fode as boris is sty; \*for preyours þat sicke booris maken don to many more harm þan good. for bi þis fallas myȝte a fend or a souter be an herde ouer a þousynd men in englond & excuse residence bi a fool.

If the vicar can do the work, what need of the parson?

Vicars are often unfit.

A priest may have a fellow to help him,

but they should both reside.

Do not belong to an order under pretence of praying,

and live like a boar in a sty.  
\* [p. 85 MS.]

### Capitulum 13<sup>m</sup>.

; it argueþ þe fend to colour sicke appropriingis, þey ben conformed of þe pope & approuyd of þe court, who may impugne þis dede. but ȝif he impugne þe pope; & of þis it wolde sue þat þe pope & hise ben opyn heretikis, but where were þis fyttinge chiroche ȝif þis were soþ of þe pope, ȝif þe

Antichrist argues that these appropriations are approved by the Pope and his court.

pope & alle his clerkis weren dyuydid fro cristis chirche. for holding of cristis religioun shulde stonde moost in þe clergie, & algatis in þes newe ordris as ben freris, munkis & chanouns.

heers seyen trewe men in god more hardily þan þey weren wont þat þis is a lewid skile, ȝif þe pope approue þis þing þanne þis þing mut nedis be trewe, for herby þe contrarye is þe more liely. for siþ þe pope is more tempted þan oþere men & more led bi þe fend, it semyþ bi þe popis confermyng þat þis is þe fendis werk. & heers is more colours in þis resoun þan in resouns þat aristotle telliþ þat ȝif a man haue a kempt hed þanne he is a lecherous man. sumtyme it may falle so & sumtyme þe contrarye may falle, as þe pope may sumtyme falle on þe soþe & sumtyme discorde þerfro, as he

The Pope's approval does not show a thing to be right.

The Pope may approve fighting in his cause.

may bi fauours or money approue fȝting of prestis & ful asoyling of men þat fȝten faste in his cause. but trowe we herfore þat god wole folde fro riȝtwesnesse of his lawe? for god is moost mersiful al ȝif he suffers sicke blasfemyes, & þus he wolde þat mersy were in men & forȝyuenesse of þer wrongis; & not þat men shulden fȝte to-gidere for sicke lordchip of anticrist. ȝif it be treuþe of goddis lawe god in þat confermeþ it, & ȝif it be falsed aȝenus god, ȝit it is treuþe as austyn seiþ, & so god confermeþ it to be punyȝschid bi his wille; but þe fend is autour þer-of & stiriþ men to trowe to

Men that know the Pope's errors should speak of them.

it. & þus men þat han kunnyng & knowen þe errours of þe pope shulden wiþ mekenesse & obediense telle þes errouris to hym & oþere. For þus dide poul for liȝt synne þat petre did aȝen þe chirche, & ellis men loueden not þe pope ne iesu crist ne his chirche. þus bi cantels of þe fend is hate turnyd to name of loue & loue turnyd to name

\*[p. 9 MS.]

The only power the Pope has is to edify men by God's law.

of hate, \* & þus ben many men disseyued. & men trowen as bileue þat þe pope haþ no power but to edifie þe chirche bi þe lawe þat god haþ ȝouyn; for poul seiþ he haþ noon oþer, & he hadde as myche as þe pope. & siþ þer is no power but of god, & god ȝyueþ no power to destrie his spouse; neþer pope ne oþer man haþ power but to helpe þe chirche bi goddis lawe. & þus feynyng of anticristis powers, þat is fals aȝenus þis

treuþe, comeþ of þe fadir of lesingis & disseyneþ many men.

& as anentis heresies of þe pope & his clerkis supposen many trewe men þat he & hise ben heretikis, for þei holden aþenus goddis lawe worldly lordchipis in preſtis hondis, & þis is aþenus crist & his lawe, & maynteynen<sup>1</sup> wrong aþenus worldly lordis. crist wole punyſche þis heresie & make it more knowun her-aftir, al þif anticrist & hise seyn nou þat noone ben heretikis but þei þat seyn þus. mennus diffynyng of heresie is litil worþ but to blame men þat don & speken aþenus goddis lawe, for siche ben mooste heretikis. & þus appropriing of chirchis, newe brouȝt in bi þe fend, soweþ symonye & lesingis to make þis propring to be grauntid. & þus algatis ben pore men robbid of worldly godis & goostly help, & þe fend haȝ an entre to ouercome helples men, as ben men of siche pariſchis & opore þat assenten herto.

The Pope and his are heretics, since they hold property against God's law.

Evils brought in by appropriations.

### Capitulum 14<sup>m</sup>.

þ it argueþ þe fend þat bi þis folȝ þat heere is spokun alle collegies þat ben in studies shulden be destried; but where were þanne cristendom? for þif filosofie & dyuynite wantiden in þe reume of englond, where were þanne bileue of men or goddis lawe in englond? for collegies in oxneford & caumbrige ben foundid on siche appropriingis, & collegians wenden out & prechen & quykenen many partis of englond; & degre takun in scole makij goddis word more acceptable, & þe puple trowij betere þerto whanne it is seyð of a maistir.

The devil argues that if appropriations are taken from the colleges, learning will perish.

heere men seyn þat many goodis han comun bifore of siche studies, but neuere so myche siȝen collegies weren dowid as dide bifore þer rentis weren proprid; & þerfore it were good þat þes studies & collegies þat ben in hem stooden in as myche as þei acorden to goddis lawe & lyuen wel, & as myche as þei discorden fro cristis lawe þat þey weren mendid. but siȝ þat

Studies were carried on before colleges were endowed.

<sup>1</sup> mayntenynd MS.

The apostles took no degree.  
Matt. xxiii.  
and Christ forbade them to be called 'Master.'

\*[p. 9b MS.]

Some good comes out of all evil.

Adam and Eve did good in sinning.

Some priests that have not been at college are better than some that have.

Schoolmen work to get reputation.

Money wasted at inceptions.

apostlis taken no sicke degre & crist forfendide hem to be clepid maystris, it semeþ þat þis heþen maner brougt in in studies discordiþ fro þe gospel; & as preching of apostlis was betere þan is preching of þes maystris, so prestis wiþ-oute degre of scole may profite more þan don þes maystris. \*take þe good fro þe yuel, & holde þe good & leue þe yuel; & moue it not þee þat of sicke yuel comeþ myche good to men & reumes, for god wole suffers noon yuel be don but if good come þerof. & þus if comyng of good þat springiþ of yuel bi goddis grace shulde moue men to do þat yuel, & continue it & holde it, ech yuel shulde be don & a man shulde fle noon yuel; for yuel of fendis doiþ myche good, as adam & eue diden good in synnyng, but it was don on yuel maner & þerfore þe maner shoulde be fled. & þus if dyuynite were lernd on þat maner þat apostlis diden, it shulde profite myche more þan it doiþ nou bi staat of scole, as prestis nou wiþ-oute sicke staat profiten more þan men of sicke staat; & contynue þey in good lif & in boundis of goddis lawe, & þis shal make þe folc more trowe þan doiþ degre takun in scole. & manye sciensis ben vsid in scole þat profiten not to goddis lawe, but tarien & letten fro þis lawe, as poul techiþ opynly. & þus mannus lawe tauȝt in scolis lettiþ goddis lawe to growe, & no drede god is þat maistre þat wole teche nou as redily as he wolde bifore þis tyme, if prestis lif be shapun þerto. & þat semyþ no good mene to passe ouer cristis ordenaunse & his lawe for good þat god sendiþ herof, for þanne men shulden [not] drede to synne. & þus men of scole trauelen veynly for to gete newe sutiltees, & to magnifie þer name for þer worship & þer wynnyng, & þe profit of hooly chirche bi þis weye is put abac. & in making of þes maystris ben pore mennus godis ofte wasted, & þe kyng of pride is hied & cristis mekenesse is put bihynde. many sicke synnes þat stiren to stryues comen of sicke partis in studies; & þus bi propring of chirchis comeþ riȝtly noon help to þe chirche.

Capitulum 15<sup>m</sup>.

a nt heere þe freris wiþ þer fautours seyn þat it is heresye Friars say it is heresy to translate the Bible.  
to write þus goddis lawe in english, & make it knowun

to lewid men. & fourty signes þat þey bringen forto They give forty signs to know a heretic.  
shewe an heretik ben not worþy to rehearse, for nouȝt groundiþ  
hem but nygromansye.

it semyþ first þat þe wit of goddis lawe shulde be tauȝt God's word should be taught in the tongue known to the people.  
in þat tunge þat is more knowun, for þis wit is goddis word.

whanne crist seiþ in þe gospel þat boþe heuene & erþe shulen  
passe but his wordis shulen not passe, he vndirstondith bi  
his woordis his wit. & þus goddis wit is hooly writ, þat  
may on no maner be fals. Also þe hooly gost ȝaf to apostlis

The Apostles at Pentecost had the gift of tongues.

þe puple goddis lawe þerby; & so god wolde þat þe puple  
were tauȝt goddis lawe in dyuerse tungis; but what \*man \*[p. 10 MS.]  
on goddis half shulde reuerse goddis ordenaunse & his wille?

& for þis cause seynt ierom trauelide & translatide þe bible St. Jerome translated the Bible into Latin.  
fro dyuerse tungis into lateyn þat it myȝte be aftir translatid

to oþere tungis. & þus crist & his apostlis tauȝten þe puple in  
þat tunge þat was moost knowun to þe puple; why shulden  
not men do nou so? & herfore autours of þe newe law,  
þat weren apostlis of iesu crist, writen þer gospels in  
dyuerse tungis þat weren more knowun to þe puple. Also

þe worþy reume of fraunse, not-wiþ-standinge alle lettingis,  
haþ translatid þe bible & þe gospels wiþ oþere trewe sentensis  
of doctours out of lateyn in-to freynsch, why shulden not  
engliȝsche men do so? as lordis of englond han þe bible in  
freynsch, so it were not aȝenus resoun þat þey hadden þe  
same sentence in engliȝsch; for þus goddis lawe wolde be  
betere knowun & more trowid for onehed of wit, & more  
acord be bi-twixe reumes. & herfore freris han tauȝt in

The French have a translation.

englond þe paternoster in engliȝsch tunge, as men seyen in Friars have taught the Paternoster in English.  
þe pley of york, & in many oþere cuntreys. siþen þe pater-  
noster is part of matheus gospel, as clerkis knowen, why Why may not the rest of Matthew's gospel be Englished?

may not al be turnyd to engliſch trewely, as is þis part? specialy siþen alle cristenmen, lerid & lewid, þat shulen be sauȝd, moten algatis sue crist & knowe his lore & his lif.

Englishmen may learn Christ's law best in English.

but þe comyns of engliſchmen knowen it best in þer modir tunge, & þus it were al oon to lette sicke knowing of þe gospel & to lette engliſch men to sue crist & come to heuene.

There may be faults in translation,

Wel y woot defaute may be in vntrewe translating, as myȝten haue be many defaultis in turnyng fro ebreu in-to

so there may have been in the Latin version.

Let men study God's law, and correct the mistakes.

Three reasons that actuate the friars.

1. They wish to be thought the only men who understand God's law.

greu, & fro greu in-to lateyn, & from o langage in-to another. but lyue men good lif & studie many persones goddis lawe; & whanne chaungyng of wit is foundun amende þey it as resoun wole. summen seyn þat freris trauelen & þer fautours in þis cause for þre chesouns, þat y wole not aferme, but god woot wher þey ben soþe. first þey wolden be seun so nedeful to þe engliſchmen of oure reume þat singulerly in her wit lay; þe wit of goddis lawe, to telle þe puple goddis lawe on what maner euere þey wolden. & þe secound cause

2. They wish to keep back what they please of God's law.

herof is seyde stonde in þis sentense; freris wolden lede þe puple in techinge hem goddis lawe & þus þei wolden teche sum, & sum hide, & docke sum. For þanne defaultis in þer lif shulden be lesse knowun to þe puple, & goddis lawe shulde be vntreweliere knowun boþe bi clerkis & bi comyns.

3. They fear their faults will be seen when God's law is known.

\*[p. 105 MS.]

þe þridde cause þat men aspien stondiþ in þis as þey seyn; alle þes newe ordris dreden hem þat þer synne shulde be knowun, \* & hou þei ben not groundid in god to come in-to þe chirche, & þus þey wolden not for drede þat goddis lawe were knowun in engliſch, but þey myȝten putte heresy on men ȝif engliſch toolde not what þey seyden. god moue lordis & bischops to stonde for knowing of his lawe.

### Capitulum 16<sup>um</sup>.

Tithes are due to true priests.

t were to speke ouer þis of dymes & of offeringis þat ben hire to prestis þat don trewely þer seruyss; & dymes ben clepid goddis part in goddis lawe for greet wit. many causis men tellen comynly why dymes ben clepid



goddis part. nyne partis ben of creaturis & god is in þe tenþe degre; & in tokene þat god is lord general ouer alle creaturis, men ȝyuen god þe tenþe part in tokene of his general lordchip. þe werkes of þe sixe dayes in whiche god made þe world holden sixe kyndis of þingis in þis ordre of ten; & ȝit þer ben nyne ordris of aungels, al ȝif þe firste bok of þe bible specifie not þes nyne ordris, as poul doiþ in his bokis. þe eyȝthe maner of creaturis ben comyn þingis þat god haþ maad, & hooly writ spekiþ of hem in many bokis of goddis lawe. þe nyneþe maner of creaturis, & þe hierste of alle op̃ere, is þe manshed of crist: & on þis sueþ his godhed, & þis tenþe þing is hierst lord of al maner of creaturis. & god moueþ al maner of tungis to clepe þis firste noumbe of ten bi symple name & aftirward þei clepen it bi a gederid name; & þis may men se in many tungis. & þis mouyde men in many agis to paye to god þe tenþe part, so þat bi þis þey confessiden to hym þe generalte of his lordchip; & þis cause is ynow to moue men to paye dymes. but it were for-to wite whiche men shulden reseýue dymes. þe firste bok of þe olde lawe telliþ of abel & caym, hou þey brenten þer tyþis to god, & þe smoke wente up to heuene. & it is licky þat þis maner lastide vn-to þe tyme of moyses; but god lymytide in moysees lawe þat prestis & dekenes shulden lyue on dymes, & semelily þis maner lastide vn-to þe comyng of crist. but nou in þe þridde tyme of grace prestis & prelatiſ chalengen to hem dymes & mennus offeringis bi autorite of þe olde lawe, & þis semyþ skileful, so þat men trauele wel wiþ hem, for men shulden paye þer dymes ȝit as þey diden in þe olde lawe, but þey shulden not brenne hem nou, for þer ben many pore goddis seruauantis. & þus lawe & skile chacchiþ men to ȝyue to trewe prestis þes dymes, for þis were moost liȝt & resonable ȝif þat prestis lyuen wel. & men nedes not to rikene heere hou ofte þe olde lawe biddiþ þat prestis shulden haue hem; but for crist & hise apostlis weren fewe & lyueden on litil almes, \*y can-not se bi goddis lawe þat ne dymes may be partid among cristis pore men, þe whiche crist

Tithes are due to God as a sign of his universal lordship. Nine orders of creatures.

God is the tenth order. How language witnesses to this.

Tithes at first were burnt;

but in the time of Moses God appointed them to priests. This remains in the law of grace.

Men should pay tithes to priests if they live well.

But tithes may be \* [p. 11 MS.] partly given to the poor.

Luke xiv. [13.] telliþ in þe gospel, as pore feble & pore lame & pore blynde. & prestis ben þe firste for þei shulden be pore as crist, & feble þey ben to do þer seruyss & to gete þer-wiþ fode & hiling. crist koude bi weye of myraclis & weye of almes gete ynow, but þit crist was pore & feble & figuride prestis aftir to come.

### Capitulum 17<sup>m</sup>.

i t wers to shewe aftir þis þat þe lawe þat god ȝyueþ bi seynt poul his apostle in his writing to tymothe shulde not ceesse for ours taking of offeringis & dymes bi þe olde lawe. Seynt poul biddiþ to tymothe & rikeneþ hym silf as o man to whiche þat he spekiþ to, & ȝyueþ hem þis reule of god: "whanne we han fode & hiling, be we payed of þes þingis." lord, siþ þis is a skileful reule þat goddis lawe ȝyueþ to prestis & clerkis, why shulden þey leue þis for a willeful chesing þat þey taken of þe olde lawe? specialy siþ þes two lawis acorden boþe in wordis & resoun þat prestis shulden lyue on dymes & be payed of fode & hiling. certis ȝif god wolde þat þe toon ceesside, we shulden not take þes two to-gidere; but god wers in þis to blame þat he telde not which he wolde wers kept. siþen we taken dymes of þe olde lawe bi ours oune autorite, leue we not þis bileue þat god ȝyueþ vs bi poule apostle; algatis siþ þis is skileful & ynow to a trewe prest. & of þis may men se ouer þat prestis shulden not gedere to hem dymes & offeringis of many chirchis, þat weren ouer þer fode & hilinge, for þus it were not leueful to a prest for to do in þe olde lawe; myche more we shulden not do þus, siþ crist keppe so streyt pouert. ȝif a prest myȝte be two men & do fully þe trauel þat fellide to hem, þanne it were to hym a coulur to take ful hire of two men; for men ben nou more insufficient þan þei weren in cristis tyme. but ȝit it semyþ excusable to haue to-gidere many benefisis, so þat þey come not alle to-gidere but to a skileful sustenaunse of man. but be þou war heere wiþ

Saint Paul's rule to Timothy more binding than the old law.

1 Tim. vi. [8.]

The two really agree.

Priests should not take the tithes of many churches, to have more than their needs.

If a priest could be two men, he might have two men's allowances;

yet pluralism is allowable when a man does not get more than he needs.

ydilnesse & wiþ exceesse of dispensis, & algatis putte þy  
 bisynesse to *serue* god & helpe his chirche, & loue more  
 þes two þingis þan worldly worship or worldly \*richees. \*[p. 115 MS.]  
 & þus þer ben many *mevnis* lawis of departing of *persouns*  
 godis, hou þey shulen be delid on foure partis. hou þey &  
 herne shulen first take mesurably of þes godis; þe secound  
 part shulde be þouyn to pore & nedy folc wiþ-outeward; þe  
 þridde part shulde be þouyn to making of þe chirche &  
 ournementis of it; & þe fourþe part shulde be dispendid to  
 kepe þe housis of þe personage. & þis parting were ofte  
 vnskileful, & þus siche general lawe were nouȝt. & þer ben  
 oþere difficultees heere, what þing men shulden tiþe, as wode  
 or erbis or oþer fruyt; wher laboreris shulden tiþe þer hire;  
 & hooris or vsureris tiþe þer wynnyng; wiþ many siche  
 doutis in lawe; þe whiche dyuynes shulden leue vntretid,  
 & lyue in pouert & *serue* þe chirche. for cristis prestis  
 shulden haue no custom to ocupie hem wiþ siche stryues,  
 but gederis al þer bisynesse to *serue* god & his chirche.

Rules commonly  
 given for dis-  
 posing of tithes.

Hartful disputes  
 as to whether  
 tithes are due  
 from woods,  
 from wages, from  
 whores, and  
 usurers.

Divines should  
 leave these  
 matters.

### Capitulum 18<sup>m</sup>.

i t were to telle ouer þis hou þes herdis shulden kepe þer  
 sheep in hoolynesse of þer oune lif & in preching of  
 goddis word. & þanne þey ledden hem bi grene lesewis  
 & water of heuene þat ben hoolsum, & þis is þe firste offyas of  
 þre þat falliþ to a goostly shepparde. first shulde þe person  
 fle in hym silf lustly fode & proud aray, & þenke on þis, þat  
 his godis whanne þei ben gederid, be þey neuere so many,  
 ben gederid of his pore pariȝschens, as ben wedewis & nedy  
 men; so þat o peny gederid þus wolde saue þe lif of his sheep  
 þat steruyþ. & þus it is a fendis boost to a curat to auaunte  
 hym þat he may so myche dispende bi ȝeers, siþ þei ben  
 cuylid pens of pore men; & þis is noon auaunt to þe person,  
 but resoun to rikene for al þis almes. & þis is more þan  
 worldly dette, siþen he is holdun to ȝelde betere; & ours iuge

Pastors should  
 live holly and  
 preach God's  
 word.

The priest should  
 think that all his  
 goods come from  
 his poor parish-  
 ioners,

and that he will  
have to give a true  
account of them.

\*[p. 12 MS.]  
God is most  
liberal, and  
wishes curates  
to have what  
they need.

They do not need  
rich clothes,

or handsome  
furniture.

or valuable plate.

To waste money  
on hawks and  
hounds is dam-  
nable in a priest.

may not be disseyned, siþ he is crist wisdom of god. þes  
curatis þat lyuen to lustly shulden þenke hou godis þat þey  
han ben gederid of pouert of symple men bi streit nede  
& hard lif. but who wolde waste a precious water þat were  
distillid bi bisy trauel, & caste þis water in a lake where it  
stood to no mannus profit? & þes men þat lyuen þus lustly ben  
þe more vnhabile to præche & to præye; but no drede, siþ our  
\*god is resoun & þe freest man þat may be, he wole þat  
curatis haue skileful fode; but þer lust may not be iuge  
heere, but resoun must nedis iuge, for it mut iuge at domes  
day. & þe same skile is of oþer aparel, to bac, to chaumbre  
& to halle, as many han to costly clopis, furroures & girdlis  
& shap of hem; & ende of þis is worldly glory & no profit to  
þer soulis; & þe same synne is in aparel of chaumbre, as in  
proud beddis testeris & curteyns: bi þis may men se veyn  
dispensis þat þe fendis cautil haþ foundun. curiousteste stowdiþ  
in hallis, boþe in making of þe housis, in doseris, bancurs  
& cupshens, & mo veyn þingis þan we kunnen rikene, as ben  
dijschis & coupis of siluer & oþer vessel, & costly naprye.  
in alle siche shulden persouns þenke of þis reule þat god haþ  
jouyn of skileful<sup>1</sup> ende of alle siche þingis; & mesure þe  
menes bi þis ende, & euere more drawe to pouert, þat it  
shyne in alle siche þingis. but præstis wasting in oþer  
þingis, as ben horsis, haukis & houndis, & costly making of  
feestis, ben ful dampnable bifore god; for þey shynen wiþ  
worldly ioye, & ben writun wiþ viciis aþenus resoun. what  
skile is it at þe day of doom to answers to þe lord of þes  
godis þat pore men, þat shulden haue þes godis, peripæche  
wiþ-outen bi many defautis, & her godis be wastid wiþ-ynne  
wiþ rot & wormes & oþer maner. þis is no skileful acounte  
to god to ȝyue hym rikenyng of his tyþis.

<sup>1</sup> skilefuly MS.

Capitulum 19<sup>m</sup>.

o f þis wasting of goddis godis springen synnes þat harmen

þe chirche, for siche curatis ꝑyuen not ensauple hou  
men shulen fīte aꝑenus þer fleys. but it may falle Luxurious curates do not teach their people to fight against their flesh.

many tymes þat siche persouns bi leccery waste þer pore  
pariꝑschens godis, & þis is a greet synne. it is yuel to kepe It is bad to keep a useless horse in the stable,

a wast hors in stable to destrie pore mennus godis, but it is  
worse to have a womman wiꝑ-yne or wiꝑ-oute at racke & but worse to have a woman at rack and manger.

at manger, for þis holding is more costly & more wast to  
body & soule. þe lawe spekiꝑ of siche holours þat synnen The (pope's) law forbids hearing the mass of a fornicator.

þus out of matrimonye, hou þey ben not weddid wiꝑ þe  
chirche ne wiꝑ god, þat is þe soulis spouse; & hou men  
shulden not here þer massis, & bi þe same sky\*le take not \*[p. 126 MS.]

of hem noon oꝑer spiritual seruyss. for al þer lif is wlappid  
wiꝑ synne, & þey don harm what euers þei don. & þus men  
shulden not ꝑyue hem offeringis ne oꝑere tiꝑis, þe while Mens should withdraw their tithes.

þey lyuen þus, for þat were consent to þer synne, & to nurshe  
hem aꝑenus crist. but ech man of þis world, be he neuere

so myꝑti heere, þat makiꝑ þus party aꝑenus crist, mut nedis  
falle & destrie hym silf; for treuþe mut vengusche al oꝑer

þing. & þis wiꝑdrawing of temporal godis were betere  
bridil aꝑenus siche men þan to amersy hem bi officials, bi This would be better than setting archdeacons to fine them.

erchedekenes or bi bischops; for siche robbing is but nurshing  
of more synne. for siche a persoun wole robbe his pariꝑs

whanne he may bie his synne þus liꝑtly; & so þe pore men  
of his pariꝑs shulen bie his synne bi double weye, boþe þey It is the parishioners who pay the fines.

shulen paye þerfore to þe bischop, and be punyꝑschid bi  
consent of soule. but what is þe pariꝑs holpun herby, but

ꝑif þe fend helpe a man? for bodily & goostly þis curat doiꝑ  
harm to his sheep more falsly þan koude þe fend, for he is

more homely enemye. & þis wiꝑdrawing of godis for þis  
synne semyꝑ to stretche for oꝑere synnes, for ꝑif an herde Withdrawal of tithes may be used against other sins.

be doump at home & ꝑyue hym to worldly ocupacioun, &  
wiꝑ-drawe his goostly help fro his sheep þat he shulde fede,

The tithes may be given to help poor men against the oppression of Antichrist.

Curates who live at the Court of Rome should not be paid.

\*[p. 13 MS.]

or if he stonde in lordis courtis or in offis of þe king or of oþere, and leue þe seruyss þat god axiþ to kepe his sheep in goddis lawe; if þis synne passe leccery, it shulde be more punysshid bi skile. & so men shulden wiþ-drawe þer tiþis & gyue hem to oþere wisely. it were an almes & greet wit to gyue tiþis of sicke welues to oþere parijschens þat ben trauelid bi lawis þat anticrist haþ brouȝt yn; & so ofte tyme þe remenaunt of tiþis were to litil for dispensis þat anticrist makith to pursue sicke men, þat stonden for resoun of goddis lawe. & hou euere iuges speken heere, þis were not aȝenus goddis lawe, for al sicke almes of tiþis shulde be boþe skileful & willeful; but what skile is it to hire a wolf to do harm to a parijs? þis were a mouyng of þe fend, þat stirith euere aȝenus skile. & þe same skile is of curatis þat stonden in þe court of rome forto gete mo benefisis, or to serue þat wickid court; \*for þes ben smyttid wiþ symonye & don men harm ouer þe see, as a iust man of ynde profitith to englijsch men; for þe lord þat seeþ þis meede is euery where to dele it wel. for sum help axiþ bodily residence, & sum help axiþ noon; as prayeris & many oþere gode dedis ben as wel don afer as neer; but þis is noon herdis offis to be hirid for tiþis or offeringis.

### Capitulum 20<sup>m</sup>.

Prelates should teach their people to conquer the world and the devil.

Readiness to go to law with them is not good teaching.

t were for to wite ouer hou prelatis shulden teche þer sugetis to venouȝsche þe world & þe fend, for to þis lore ben þei holdun. lore to venguȝsche þe world stondiþ specialy in charite, & in fleyng of coueytise to godis of þer parijs & oþere; & so it semyþ an yuel lore to gyue parijschens ensaunple to plete & to stryue wiþ hem for litil, whanne þey han ynow bi-syde. for sicke ple is groundid in wronge don aȝenus goddis lawe, for bi goddis lawe prestis shulden haue no more but fode & hiling for þer offis, & al þe remenaunt of þer hire þey shulden hope of god in blis. Also it falliþ

comynly þat a curat dispendiþ as myche in plees mayntenyd <sup>Law suits for</sup> for his tiþis as ben þe tiþis in hem silf; but where is þanne <sup>tithes sometimes</sup> encrees of his wynnyng? it semyþ þat wrappe of his <sup>cost as much as</sup> parijschen & harm of hym stonden for þe wynnyng; but hou <sup>the tithes,</sup> stondiþ þis wiþ charite to þe man þat preestis shulden <sup>and the curate</sup> algatis loue? & þus biddiþ poul to cristenmen, but specialy <sup>gains only the</sup> [Rom. xii. 19.] to curatis, þat þey shulden be moost dere & not defende þer <sup>hate of his people.</sup> oune persone; myche more þey shulden not defende þe godis þat ben not sib to hem, but men shulden ȝyue stede to ire & algatis prelatis, in suffering of wronge for siche ire, baytiþ a parijschen aȝenus þe persoun longe tyme aftir. & ȝif þe pope feyne heere þat he ȝyueþ lawis & weye to hem to defende a mannis wrongis in his court; & þis is shewid for many wrongis ben riȝtid þere. & þus þey clepen hym a <sup>The courts are</sup> champion of riȝt of god, þat can wel plete &, as þey speken, <sup>praised because</sup> wynne to hooly chirche godis þat shulden falle to it. preise <sup>they win goods</sup> þey þis court þat han mater, but certis heere is no mater; for <sup>for the Church.</sup> þis is a cautel of þe fend contrarie to goddis lawe. studie þey cristis paciense & make þei þer chayer in cristis cros, & loke þey wheþer crist or his apostlis tauȝten þus to plete <sup>Christ and his</sup> for worldly þingis. & certis þey moten nedis sue crist ȝif <sup>apostles never</sup> þey wolen holde þe weye to heuene. fro a litil errour out <sup>went to law.</sup> \*of þis weye may a man come bi grace aȝen, but myche \*[p. 136 MS.] errour wiþ errour of wit makiþ man to growe in more errour, & no drede, proue who euere wole, a special medicyn aȝenus þe world is to leue stryues in worldly causis; for þus tauȝte crist wiþ his membris. & þus who so wole ouercome þe fend, leue he þe fendis lawe & þe world, & lede he his lif bi cristis lawe, & þus he shal best venguȝhe hym & ȝyue ensauple to oþere men, boþe to his parijschens & oþere, hou þey shulden venguȝhe þe fend. for þes two lawis ben graues <sup>The Civil and</sup> to þe fend to gnare men in his net. ȝif þou fle pride & his <sup>Canon Laws are</sup> retenu, þanne þou venguȝhist wel þe fend; & teche þou þis <sup>pits in which the</sup> rewle to oþer men, & þanne þou doost a curatis office. <sup>devil snares men,</sup>

Capitulum 21<sup>m</sup>.

The sort of pastor ;  
that is wanted.

He must preach  
the gospel.

God does not  
want rymes.

\*[p. 14 MS.]  
A man is not fit  
to be a curate  
who cannot  
understand the  
gospel and teach  
it.

The second office  
is to keep the  
sheep from  
wolves;

it it were to speke more of þis pastoure to ȝyue to þes  
sheep. for we shulen take as bileue þat goddis lawe  
passiþ alle opere, boþe in autorite & in treuþe & in wit.  
first in autorite; for as god passiþ men, so goddis lawe mut  
passe in autorite mannis lawe, & herfore god bad his apostlis  
not to preche mannis lawe but for to preche þe gospel to al  
maner of men. & myche more ben þey to blame þat prechen  
iapis & gabbingis; for goddis word mut euer be trewe ȝif it  
be wel vndirstondun, & þis word is more hoolsom to men  
siþen it is bileue & it techiþ to sue crist, & þat mut ech man  
do þat shal be sauýd. & þerfore þenke we heronne nyȝt  
& day, boþe wakinge & slepinge, for whanne opere lawis moten  
haue ende þanne it shal dwelle in blis; & þe herte of þis lawe  
is þe gospel of iesu crist. preche prestis þis herte to men  
& teche þey hem to loue crist; for he is cursid þat loueþ hym  
not & sueþ hym not, as poul seiþ. & certis þat prest is to  
blame þat shulde so frely haue þe gospel, & leueþ þe  
preching þer-of & turnyþ hym to mannis fablis. for þe lawe  
of god dampnyþ hym þat chesiþ þe worse & þe heuyere  
& leueþ þe betere & þe liȝtere, boþe to hym & to þe puple.  
& god axiþ not dyuysions ne rymes of hym þat shulde  
preche, but to telle euene goddis gospel & wordis to stire men  
þerby. & þus curatis ben not excusid þat leuen to preche to  
þer sheep, for a man shulde not be curat but ȝif he koude  
vn\*dirstonde þe gospel, & he haþ to myche wanting of wit  
þat can-not teche hem herby. & ȝif a curat falle a caas þat  
he be lettid of þis preching bi hap or defaute of kynde,  
whanne he prechide bifore wel, teche he his floc bi hooly lif  
& god wole haue hym excusid. þe secounde offis þat falliþ  
to herdis is to kepe þer sheep fro woluya, as false freris,  
þat comen to men to robbe þer wolle & do hem harm, ben  
clepid of crist woluyes of raueyn. and of þis perel shulden  
persouns warne men. & what opere false prechouris þat



comen to men & prechen herfore, þei ben woluyz or foxis or houndis, & alle þes shulden be chased fro þe floe. þe þridde offis þat falliþ to persouns is to greese þer scabbid sheep & to telle hem medicyn of goddis lawe wherby þat þey may be hool; & if þes herdis faylen in þes þre, þey ben hirid hynes or woluyz. & heere shulden persouns take hede þat þey spuylen not þer sheep for wrongis þat þer prelatis axen; for þey shulden leene þer cure bifore.

the third to  
anoint the  
scabbed sheep.

### Capitulum 22<sup>m</sup>.

i t were forto wite ouer hou curatis wasten pore mennus godis in makinge þer kyn riche; bisyde þat þey spenden in þer oune persone; & þus ben many in englond maad

Curates spend  
tithes in en-  
riching their  
kinsfolk.

riche fro ful symple staat. & it semyþ þat þe kyng of pride haþ tauȝt þis bi his firste synne, for many curatis han delit to haue riche men of þer kyn & þat þer aldris weren noble men, as if þer kynrede were noble; & þus hem silf shulden seme noble, as if þey camen of greet blood. & siche ben turnyd in-to woluyz fro herdis staat, as ipoeritis; for þey semen to haue an herdis staat, & if þey ben many tymes fendis. for we shulden wite þis at þe bigynnyng þat prestis ben maad prelatis of men, not to lyue worldlyly ne lustly ne proudely, but to lyue in bisy trauel to kepe þer sheep & wynne hem heuene; & so þei moten lyue trewely, trauelously & perelously, siþen þei moten putte þer oune lif for þer sheep, as crist dide. to þis riching of persouns kyn moueþ þe fend þes ipoeritis bi feyned mersy & bi kynde; & boþe he seiþ comen of god. \*What man shulde not haue mersy

Curates like  
to haue their  
families rich  
and noble.

on his pore kyn to helpe hem, for heere is more cause of mersy þan to helpe opere straunge men; as a man loueþ bi kynde more his lemes þan opere mennus, so bi kynde he shulde loue more his kyn þan opere strange men. & by þis cause many prelatis coueyten to be riche & anaunsen men of þer kyn, al if þey ben idiotis; but þe bileue of iesu

\*[p. 145 MS.]  
The devil argues  
that mercy and  
nature teach men  
to help their  
kindred.

Christ did not  
enrich his mother  
and cousins.

We should live in  
the same way as  
Christ.

These prelates  
and curates  
injure their  
kindred.

\*[p. 15 MS.]

crist shulde teche men to queneche his pride. crist louyde  
ful wel his kyn, as his modir & his cosyns, but he louyde  
hem not to be worldly riche but forto lyue a pore lif, bitwixe  
siche richees & beggyng; for þus men shulden haue lyued  
in staat of innocense & staat of blis, & þis is best for þe soule  
þe which men shulden moost loue. & þe loue of crist is  
loue so nedeful to cristenmen, þat þer loue is but hate but  
þif it be ensaumplid of cristis loue. & þus clerkis haten  
þer kyn þat maken hem riche of pore mennus godis; for bi  
þis þey harmen þer soule & maken hem synne bi many weyes.  
þer body is þus more vnhabable to serue þer soule in temperure,  
& þey ben felowis bi assent to robbe þes pore men of þer  
godis; & no drede cause of þis pride is vnprofitable to hem,  
for nobley in vertues shulde be coneytid & worldly nobley  
litol teld by, but in as myche as it helpide men to kepe  
nobley in vertues. & in tokene of þis þing crist cam boþe  
of riche men & pore, as of kyngis & bonde men þe while  
þey lyueden in egipt. & boþe þes condicions diden good  
whanne grace of crist mouyde men to vertues. & þus þes  
prelatis harmen þer kyn to make hem riche on þis maner.  
& þus þes curatis louynge þus þer kyn synnen many weyes  
in maner of loue, for þey louen þer oune fleys more þan þey  
louen þer briþeren in god, & crist seiþ þey ben not worþy  
of crist to be clepid cristenmen; & þit crist shulde be oure  
nexste fadir, & his chirohe oure nexste modir. & þus þes  
prelatis þat turnen þis loue synnen boþe in god & man, &  
disusen kyndely wille as don synneris in leecherye; & þus  
þey synnen in morsy & loue & in god & þer pore parischens.  
& herfore seiþ poul þat persouns offis shulde not be to parte  
þes godis, but to preche & teche þe folc & holde hem payed  
wiþ fode & hiling. but litil errour & ydilnesse in þe  
bigynnyng of a staat bringiþ in \*more aftir, as it falliþ  
heere & in oþere statis.

*Capitulum 23<sup>m</sup>.*

i t were forto declare heere þat riȝt preching of goddis Preaching the best work priests can do.  
word is þe mooste worþy dede þat prestis don heere  
among men. for crist, mesure of al good, vside moost Christ preached and bade his apostles do so.  
his werk heere & tauȝte whanne he wente to heuene his  
apostlis to do þis werk; & þus, siþen crist is best maystir,  
it is shewid of bileue þat preching is þe beste werk þat a  
prest doiþ in þis weye. Also goodnesse of werkis is  
mesurid bi fruyt þat comeþ of hem; but more fruyt comeþ Preaching brings more fruit than any other work.  
of good preching þan of ony oþer werk, & þerfore siþe  
good preching is þe beste werk þat a prest doiþ; for bi þis By preaching children are begotten to God.  
werk a prest getiþ goddis children & makith hem to come to  
heuene. & herfore seiþ poul to his puple: "in crist iesu [1 Cor. iv. 15.]  
y haue gendrid þou;" & herfore crist preisiþ more preching  
of þe gospel þat gendriþ þis chirche þan gendring of his  
oun body, al ȝif þey boþe ben gode werkis. & þus seyn  
clerkis þat gendrure, siþ it saueþ comyn kynde, is betere  
þan is nurshing þat saueþ o persone of þis kynde. & þus  
seiþ crist in lukis gospel to a womman þat blisside cristis  
modir & sayde, "blissid be þe wombe þat bare þee & þe tetis [Luke xl. 27.]  
þat þou hast sokun," & crist seyde: "ȝe but blissid ben  
þey þat heren goddis word & kepen it." & bi þe same skile  
or myche more þei ben blissid þat prechen goddis word.  
lord, hou worþy werk it is to gendre god in mannus soule  
bi seed þat is goddis word; for þis mut haue greet meede  
in heuene, boþe for þe werk in hym silf & of þe children  
þat comen þer-of. & herfore seiþ ioon euangelist þat he  
haþ no more grace heere þan to here his children go in treuþe.  
& ȝif þou seist þat a prest may not gete siþe children in  
god; certis he may bi help off god, & ellis no man may  
gete a child, for god ȝyueþ bi hym silf þe soule, & who gat  
a child but ȝif it were ȝouyn? & herfore þenkiþ seynt  
austyn wel þat crist dide more myracle bi his apostlis to  
turne so manye heþen men in so short while fro so wickid

Good preaching  
the best craft.

\*[p. 15b MS.]

Great sin of  
hindering it.

lif for to be þus cristis children, þan weren oþere myraclis of crist; & herfore þe apostlis chosen more to præche þan to do bodily almes. Also þe more þat crist helpiþ to a werk þe more it is good; but crist helpiþ more specialy to præching þan to oþer werk, & herfore it mut nedis be betere for crist endiþ it þus graciously. & herfore seyn wise doctours þat it is more to præche wel þan to do ony oþer craft, as phisik or alkemone; & herfore crist \*bad his apostlis do many werkis but noon as þis. for in þis a preest cloþiþ hym in cristis persone & getiþ cristis broþer, his sister & his modir. & of þis may a man gedere þat it is more synne to fayle in þis þan to fayle in oþere werkis þat ben not so gode as þis is. lord, siþ þe synne of sodom cryede to god for greet veniaunce, hou shal þis synne þat lettiþ þis gendrure crye to god to be a-vengid.

### Capitulum 24<sup>m</sup>.

Three ways of  
sinning as to  
preaching:

the preacher in  
not sowing good  
seed,

or in mixing  
poison of worldly  
motive with the  
seed,

[2 Cor. ii. 17.]

i t were to wite ouer þis hou men fallen in þis synne, & what medicyne were aȝenue it, siþ þis werk is so precious. þre maner of folc synnen heere; sumtyme þe preest þat shulde præche, þe puple þat shulde here þis præching, & he þat lettiþ goddis word to renne. þis præchours may synne on many maners bi þat þat he sowiþ not good seed, but iapis & gabbingis or oþere tryuolis, & leeneþ to præche þe word of god. for luk seiþ þat þat is seed þat no defaute is founden ynne, al ȝif þre defautes ben in þe lond vpon which þis seed is castun. on oþer maner þis preest þat sowiþ may meddle venym wiþ þis seed, as whanne he præchiþ for veyn glory or for coueytise of worldly good. & herfore seiþ poul to his puple þat we ben not holours of goddis word, but of clenness, as we speken of god, we speken bifore god in crist. & wolde god þat præchours nou wolde lerne þis leassoun of poul; þanne þey shulden speke of god & not þus of rotun seed, & as þei weren bifore god, kepinge good maner in þis lordis presence. & þey shulden præche for cristis worship

on his maner not for muc. for among alle symonyes *þat* which is the  
 euere crist sufferide in þe chiroche þis is þe fouleste of alle worst of all forms  
 of symony, much  
*opere*, vsaid ofte of prechour beggeres, for þey wolen gedere practised by men-  
 dicants.  
 comynly godis affir *þat* þey han prechid; *oper* money or corn  
 or what *opere* godis *þat* þey may gete. & þe fonnydnesse  
 of þe puple makij hem parcneris of þe beggeris synne, for Those who give  
 whanne þey yyuen hem godis heere þey assenten to þer are partners of  
 the sin.  
 symonye. & þis is a foul errour *þat* many seyn in þis mater  
*þat* þey yyuen for goddis loue & *þat* is ynow for hem, for  
 certis þis wiss lord axij boþe his godis & good maner. & for  
 þis good maner man haþ meede, & jif he faylij hym wantij  
 meede; & to destrie þis errour seiþ crist in þe gospel of seynt  
 matheu *þat* summe dampnyd men shulen seye to crist: "sirs, [Matt. vii. 22.]  
 kestiden we not out fendis \*in þy name & diden vertues in \*[p. 16 MS.]  
 þy name?" but crist shal seye to þese men: "soþely, y  
 seye to þou y knowe þou not as children of blis, for þee  
 failiden of good maner." lord, siþ þes men shulen be dampnyd  
*þat* prechen goddis word in cristis name & casten out fendis Punishment will  
 & don vertues, what meede shulen þes beggeris haue, *þat* fall on mendi-  
 caynts who slander  
 faylen in þis & lyȝen on crist & seyn *þat* crist beggide þus  
 to holde vp þer newe ordris. crist wiste ful wel *þat* þes  
 shulden come whanne he bad hem not go fro hous to hous, [Mark vi. 8-10.]  
 but dwelle in oon & wende not þennus, & bere not vpon þer  
 backis baggis ne sachels to begge þus.

### Capitulum 25<sup>m</sup>.

a s anentis two *opere* defaultis *þat* letten goddis word to  
 growe, crist tellij þre defaultis in þe erþe *þat* shulde take  
 þis word. summen ben bi-syde þe weye, & so bisied wij Christ tells of  
 þe world *þat* goddis word takij not wij hem, but þe fendis three defects in  
 the soil that  
 should take the  
 seed.  
 letten it. *opere* men ben drye as stoons & han no delit in  
 wordis but jif þey sounen to worldly wyanyng, & þese wanten  
 boþe grace & wisdom. þe þridde maner of men *þat* heren  
 goddis word ben so prickid wij worldly riches *þat* þe

þenking on þes godis lettij þe word of god to growe; & to þes þre may be reducid al þe synne in þe hereris. þe þridde men synnen more, as þen emperour prelatiſ þat wolen not suffers a man to preche whanne he tellij þer defaultis but whanne he preisiþ hem & herne, & þis nurschiþ myche synne. for sicke prelatiſ þat kunnen not preche or wolen not for bisynesse, & letten opere trewe preſtiſ to preche bi þer lordly cautels, passen þe fend in þis synne bi menes þat he haþ ordeyned to hem. for þe fend haþ no iurisdiccioun ne feyned power as þey han, & þus þat he may not do hym-silf he doiþ bi sicke seruauntiſ to hym. & no drede þis is þe fendis dede to lette men to sowe goddis word, for þerby þer souliſ shulden be fed & goddis worchip be don of men, but þey maken a goostly hungir & stoppen þe worchip of god. but where is a worse condicioun folowinge prelatiſ of anticrist? it were yuel to lette gendrurs maad in laweful matrimonye, þat pharao dide not in egipt but dreynthe þe children whanne þey weren borun, but þis is worse wiþ-uten mesure to lette þus crist to be gendrid in men. sicke a prelat semyþ a wickid hayward to lette trewe men forto traueler & go euene bi goddis weye, in which crist haþ þouny hem leue to go. for god þat ȝyueþ sicke wit & wille shapiþ þe puple to take þis seed. \* & it is al oon to seye þat y shul lette þee bi iurisdiccioun, & to seye þis is a place þat þe fend is lord of & not crist; & as þes wordis ben nedis false, so is þis iurisdiccioun; for he haþ no riȝt to seye þes wordis, but þei ben falsly feyned of þe fend. & freris procuren comynly boþe lordis & bischops to lette þis preching, so þat þer fals preching be sprad & þer wynnyng aȝenus crist, & þus is þe puple robbid of goostly help & bodily. We graunten þat iurisdiccioun shulde lette false prechours to preche; but nou haþ þe fend turnyd cristis chirche bi his prelatiſ, þat he þat wolde treuly preche þe word of þe gospel wiþ-uten hire, he shal be put a-bac, & contrarie prechour shal be takun, & þus wickid haywardis of þe fend letten þis seed þat crist shulde sowe.

Of the worst sort  
are emperor pre-  
lates,

who do for the  
devil what he  
cannot do him-  
self,

Such a prelate is  
a wicked hay-  
ward stopping  
Christ's way.

\*[p. 166 MS.]

Friars get true  
preaching  
stopped that  
their false  
preaching may  
be spread.

False preachers  
should be  
stopped.

Capitulum 26<sup>m</sup>.

a nt þus þer ben many causis þat letten goddis word to renne, & þe fend haþ trauelid aboute þes causis many þeer ful bisily; for trewe preching of goddis word displeiþ myche to þe fend. o cause is dowing of þe chirohe & riching þer-of ouer cristis wille, for bi þis prelatis slepen is synne & ben to fatte to preche þe puple, & þus þer bisynesse is stoppid to gete hem more of worldly muc. & þus þei fallen in an-oþer cause þat þei ben not payed of poulis reule to haue ynow of fode & hiling. & heere breken out þes freris ordria, for al þif þei han no worldly lordchip as han prestis þat ben dowid, þit þei spuylen men of moebilis & wasten hem in noumbre & housis, & þis excoes is more synne þan synne of þe fend in o persone. & þus þey turnen þe ende of þer preching for-to gete hem sicke godis. & þis entent mut nedis make falsed in maner of þer preching, for þei shapen þer sermons more to gete hem good þan to profite to þe chirche; & as þe firste wile of þe fend bigan soone in siluestris tyme, so þis secound wile bigan in grounding of þes newe ordria. þe þridde cause þat lettij trewe preching is appropriing of chirches. for whanne chirches ben appropriid, þes curatis tellen not bi þis preching, as munkis or chanouns or oþere collegies, but bi gederung of godis; & þus þey ben maad slowe to preche & stronge to gedere dymes to hem. & þis cautel cam later yñ & is alarged by þe pope. þe fourþe cause is bringing in of false freris bi many cuntreys; for, as it is seid bifore, þei letten trewe preching to renne & maken curatis bi many weyes to leue þis moost worþy offiss. First þey robben hem many weyes & maken hem bisy for to lyue, for þey deprauen hem to þer parischens bi floriþhid wordis þat þey bringen yn; & no drede þey shapen þer sermons bi dyuy\*siouns & oþere iapis þat þey maken moost plesse þe puple. & þus þey erren in bileue & maken þe puple to trowe to hem þat sermons ben nouȝt but in þer

Causes that prevent preaching:

Endowment of the Church, which makes prelates too fat to preach.

Friars rob men of movable goods.

They preach mainly for gain.

Appropriation of churches. Appropriators care more to gather tithes than to preach.

False friars

slander parish priests.

They preach elaborate sermons and teach that no others are worth anything.

Simple curates  
are afraid to  
preach.

The new sects  
sin worse than  
Sodom and  
Gomorrha.

The people are  
infected with  
this sin.

People should  
not give to the  
friars.

Court of Rome  
the nest of Anti-  
christ.

foorme & þus þei stoppen symple curatis þat þei doren not  
preche to þe puple, & þis defaute of preching of crist is more  
þan defaute in hereris. & so as crist seiþ in þe gospel, hope  
sodom & gomor shulen be lesse punyshid at domes day þan þes  
newe sectis brouȝt yn; for þey synneden in mannis seed, but  
þes synnen in seed of god, þat is goddis word, þat prestis  
shulden preche to turne þe lewid puple to god. & as it is  
seyd bifore, þe puple is smyttid bi þis synne, for þe puple  
assentiþ to hem bi iapis & wilis þat þey tellen hem. þe puple  
shulde not trowe to þe prechour what euers he seye in þis  
staat, but ȝif his word be groundid in god as goddis lawe or  
suynges þer-of. for þis staat is not couenable to telle iapis  
ne bourdis to men, but þat þat wole trewely fede þer soule,  
as is þe gospel & oþer goddis lawe. & þis bourding or oþer  
iapis shulde make þes freris suspect heere & make hem wante  
worldly wynnyng, for þey ben worþy myche more peyne;  
but lewidnesse of þe puple makij hem nurshe þer mooste  
enemyes. & god make þis enemyte knowun. for þis is þe  
laste & þe mooste fendis cautel; but good wille & trewe  
speche of goddis lawe shulde make hem knowun. for failing  
of goddis word & coueytise of mennus good shewen opynly  
to men whoos children þat þey ben. lord, siþen pariȝhens  
shulden take þe preching of þer oune curat & þe mynistring  
þat he shulde do, for þat shulde suffice to þat puple, Why  
shulden not men fle fro þes false prophetis, as crist biddij in  
þe gospel? but bullis of þe court of rome blynden many  
men heere, for it semeþ þe hed of errour & propre nest  
of anticrist.

### Capitulum 2[7<sup>m</sup>.]

Sects disturb the  
Church militant.

f þis may wise men see þat þes foure sectis newe brouȝt  
in, as emperour clerkis, munkis & chanouns & þes foure  
ordris of freris, disturblen moost þis fyttinge chirche  
& putten it fro þe cours of crist, & þus þes men þat  
nursen hem, as worldly lordis & fonnyd comyns & lewid



*prestis*, þat kunnæn not speke or doren not speke in goddis  
 cause, nurshen *antīcrist* & hise traytourly *ajenw* crist. þat  
 ordre þat crist haþ ordeyned in his chirche shulden we holde,  
 & mende errours in þis ordre; & not bringe in newe charg  
 to þe chirche. for \*as wanting of gode partis is defeaute in  
 oure modir body, so superfluyte is defeaute in þe same body; <sup>[p. 175 MS.]</sup>  
 For þis bringiþ in ydilnesse & charging of hooly chirche. <sup>Superfluity in the Church as bad as defect.</sup>  
 & bileue techiþ men þat þer is as myche wit in þe ordenaunse  
 of crist as in þe wordis of his gospel; and bileue techiþ  
 ouer þat crist faylide not to his chirche to ȝyue his ordenaunse  
 to it in þe making of hir partis. for men putten as myche  
 wit or more to good ordenaunse of man as to worching of  
 man aftir þis ordenaunse bifore. for wisere men moten  
 ordeyne first, & lesse wiss moten worche þer-aftir. & þis  
 moueþ many men to speke *ajenw* þes fours sectis, for no  
 man kan grounde hem in þe ordenaunse of cristis lawe, & <sup>Christ gave no ground for these orders.</sup>  
 no man seiþ þat crist forȝat hem ȝif crist wolde þat þey  
 weren of his chirche; & þus men putten vpon crist oþer foly  
 or neegligense. but who shulde here þis blasfemye but ȝif he  
 spake sharply *ajenw* it? cristis ordenaunse is put bi-hynde  
 & his lore, & oþer brouȝt in, & þis turneþ þe chirche vpsedoun,  
 & letteth men to serue crist. and lewid foolis, þat arguen  
 heere þat crist ordeyned not þis *præst*, shulden lerne þe lawe  
 of porfirie, hou god ordeynede in a comyn þing alle þe  
 synguleris þer-of. & þus dwelle þou in þe iust boundis þat  
 god haþ ordeyned for his *præst*, & þanne god haþ ordeyned  
 þee in þe comyn kynde of *præstis*. but *antīcrist* can-not  
 grounde þat god ordeynede þe kynde of popis, ne of oþere  
 emperour clerkis, ne of muskis, ne of chanounes, ne of fours  
 ordris of freris, al ȝif he ordeynede good to come of hem;  
 as god ordeynede no man to synne al ȝif he ordeynede good  
 to come of synne. & þes fours ordris smacchen synne, siþen  
 þei tellen not first cristis ordenaunse, but bringing yn of þe  
 fend to reuerse þe ordenaunse of crist. & þus lordis of þis  
 world þat mayntenen lumpis of þes ordris & þer housis &  
 possessiouns, wiþ oþere þingis þat þey han foundun, moten  
<sup>Keep yourself in the bounds that Christ ordained for his priests.</sup>  
<sup>Antichrist cannot prove that God ordained these four orders.</sup>  
<sup>These four orders smack of sin.</sup>

nedis synne, in as myche as þei reuerſen cristis ordenaunſe, & in þat þat þey letten pore preſtis to preche þe goſpel to þe puple, al iſ þey ben not of þes newe ordriſ þat ben cloſid in cayms caſtels. y rede not of cristis apoſtliſ þat þey kepten þis maner of preaching, whanne þe hooly goost hadde tauȝt hem to gete to crist al þis world. & þat preſt þat sueþ þis goost is in þat ordre þat crist haþ ordeyned. wedding wiþ þes newe bilawis, paſſinge þe wedding wiþ goddis lawe, makþ þes newe rotun ſectis & puttþ bi-hynde þe ſect of crist. & þus þes ordriſ newe brouȝt in bringen wiþ hem a newe bileue, þat noon of cristis ſect wiþ-outen hem lyueþ ſo hoolyly as þey, þat lordiſ han a paſſinge merit to grounde þes ordriſ & iȝue hem godiſ, but þey \*wolen not do þis charite, be þey neuere woxun ſo ryeche, but þey wolden rapere deſtrie oþere newe ordriſ þat ben brouȝt in; & þus þe laſte ordre of freriſ ſeiþ aȝenus goddis lawe þat willeful begging is more meedeful þan ony lif of þes oþere ordriſ.

Cain's caſtles.

Caring more for their bye-laws than for Chriſt's law makes theſe rotten ſects.

\*[p. 18 MS.]

### Capitulum 28<sup>m</sup>.

m en may ſe bi lif of ordriſ hou cristis ordenaunſe is lettid. crist ordeynede, as hym þouȝte beſt, þat hiſ diſcipliſ aftir hiſ ſteying to heuene ſhulden be departid oon fro an oþer. & ech of hem ſhulde haue hiſ folc, & ſhulden not be weddid wiþ mannis lawe, ne wiþ folc, ne wiþ housiſ, but holde hem payed of goddis lawe, & chaunge folc as god mounȝde hem, & haue no propre dwelling of þer ounre, as crist þer mayſtir tauȝte bifore. Al þis is reuerſid nou bi help & aſſent of men; for herto helpeþ þe pope & prelatiſ, worldly lordiſ & ordriſ hem ſilf, & pore men ben nedid to helpe as beestiſ led to be killid. coſtly chiriſhiſ of þes ordriſ & oþere housiſ þat þey han deſtrien olde pariſſe chiriſhiſ þat weren ordeyned bi cristis apoſtliſ. & ſiþ crist is lord of alle & not contrarie to hym ſilf, no drede men han not hiſ godiſ þus to reuerſe hiſ ordenaunſe; & þus ben manye

Chriſt ordeined that hiſ apoſtles ſhould beſeparated,

and that they ſhould be bound to no one place or people.

The churches, etc., of the ordres ruin old pariſh churches.

cayms castels maad & maytened to þes ordris aȝenus leue of þe cheef lord. but who dredith þat ne he is wroþ her-wiþ? & þis semeþ þe cause of werris & wrongis þat ben nou growun in þe chirche. lordis & men þat miȝten helpe heere shulden make men turne to cristis ordre. & if persouns hadden no glebe & no propre hous as eritage, þey sueden more crist & his apostlis; & wolde god þey wolden do þus. For it is takun of bileue þat þe ordenaunse of crist bi-syde siche housis & cloystris spedith more to do his seruyss þan siche *contrarie* ordenaunsis; & her-fore þes newe ordris moten nedis lyue *contrarie* to crist. for siþen ordenaunsis & lyues gon to-gidere of men heere, as cristis ordenaunse is chaungid, so lyues of þes lumpis ben chaungid, & no drede to þe worse, as mannus ordenaunse is worse þan cristis. & if lordis of þis world to whom crist was so kynde ben not payed of þis reuersinge, but ben brouȝt in bi þe fend to haue dwellinge in þer housis boþe curatis & þes newe ordris, as þou mayst se in lordis housis persouns or munkis or chanouns & algatis freris to lede þer meyne. but god mut algatis punysha þis, for þes persouns shulden kepe þer sheep aftir þe lawe þat god haþ ȝouyn hem. but who may reuerse goddis ordenaunse \*heere but if he renne in his offense, & þus lordis synnen heere boþe aȝenus god & man & letten goddis pees to be tauȝt, & þus londis moten nedis be disturblid. & as anentis þes newe ordris þat ben scaterid in lordis housis, it is a more vnkyndly wondir, & helpith þe fend to marre þer housis. for as þey seyn þat groundiden þes cloystris, þes men myȝten no more dwelle out þer-of þan fiȝ myȝte dwelle out of water, for vertu þat þey han þer-ynne. for ellis þes cloystris weren not nedeful ne þer oop to kepe þer reule. & siche wondris newe brouȝt in moten nedis marre men of þe world, for daliaunse wiþ newe deuels bringith in newe giles to lette cristenmen. but sum men grucchen more heere þat persouns ben holden þus traytourly aȝenus þe seruyss þat crist haþ lymytid to kepe þe soulis of his sheep, & no drede crist preisith moost þis ofiss among

These many Cain's castles are cause of wars and wrongs.

Parsons would be better without parsonage or glebe.

Since the religious leave Christ's rule, their life is also contrary to Christ.

Lords have priests living in their houses, who ought to be looking after their flock.

[p. 185 MS.]

Founders of cloisters say that monks may no more live out of them than fish out of water.

Some men think that keeping parsons from their work is even worse.

Lords should set these things to rights. alle oþere, & ȝit consenten þes worldly lordis in cowardise aȝenus crist, for þey destrien not siche traytours of god, but þat shulde be þer hye offiss.

### Capitulum 29<sup>m</sup>.

What men should be curates, and who should choose them. in en myȝten heere touche ouer þis what maner man is able bi god to be chosun to curatis offiss, & who shulde chese hym, & on what maner. & no drede siche a prest þat

Claims of the Pope, of bishops, and of lay patrons.

haþ boþe wit & wille to do þe þre offissis of an herde, þat ben teld bifore tyme, shulde be takun to þis offiss aftir þe lawe & wille of god. but who shulde chese hym þerto is myche strif by mannus lawe; as þe pope seiþ þat he shulde lymyte alle curatis to siche offissis. bishops seyn þat þei shulden ȝyue siche offiss who euere presentij, & lewyd patrouns seyn þat þey shulden presente to siche offiss bi þe lordchip, but goddis lawe tellij litil or nouȝt of siche chesing of curatis. & no drede þat ne coueytise & pride reyngnen

Simony in appointments.

in alle þes þre cheseris, for þe pope haþ þe firste fruytis & many ȝiftis gon bi symonye, & two oþere axen seruyss of hym þat þey maken curat. & þus þenken summen þat bi

Curates should have only food and clothing,

goddis lawe & resoun curatis shulden wel do þer offiss & haue no more but fode & hiling, & oþer þe puple þat shulde be tauȝt or prestis bi þe ounne wille shulden chese þis

and then there would be no striving for cures.

seruyss of prestis; & þanne it were more meedeful, and no strif shulde þanne falle aboute þe godis of þis curat, for he shulde haue no wast godis but þat þat were nedeful to his offiss. & instuyng wiþ inducting & many oþere mannus lawis weren not to charge, but riȝt offiss þat þis curat shulde do. & it semyþ a greet þraldom brouȝt in bi anticrist þat a puple þat þe pope knowij not, as he knowij not þis able prest, shulde be nedid bi þe pope to take þis prest, & ȝyue hym godis more þan goddis \*lawe lymtij hou euere þat he mynistr; for boþe þis almes shulde be meedeful & frely don bi goddis lawe, & it were to greet seruage to nede men

\*[p. 19 MS.]

to ȝyue þer godis to a prest þat dide hem harm, ȝe ȝif he were  
 cause of þer dampnyng. but þe fendis part is so strong, &  
 strengþid bi ipocrisie þat mannis lawe is so hooly & biddiþ  
 men to obesche þerto vp payne of þer dampnacioun, þat  
 goddis lawe is put bihynde. men shulden bi goddis lawe  
 ȝyue þis almes frely & wisely to þat prelat þat seruede hem  
 trewely in þis offiss, and so þey moten kunne goddis lawe  
 & holde hem payed of þis ȝifte, for þus diden poul & oþere  
 apostlis. what lawe shulde reuerse þis resoun? & it semyþ  
 not a popis offiss to make þus prelatis in vnknowun cuntreys;  
 for it is neþer groundid in goddis lawe þat þer shulde be  
 siche a pope ne þat he shulde þus reule þe puple bi þe  
 lordchip of his lawe. & no drede ȝif þes two shulden be,  
 crist wolde haue ensaumplid hem; for crist failide not in  
 siche hye poyntis þat weren so nedeful to his chirche. & þus  
 crist in leeuynge of þis techiþ þat it shulde not be, for ellis  
 crist were defaunt in ordeynynge for his chirche.

Men have to pay  
 their priest, even  
 if he does them  
 harm.

Popes should not  
 appoint prelates  
 in distant coun-  
 tries.

### Capitulum 30<sup>m</sup>.

ȝ it trewe men han delit to reherse þis bileue, for it is  
 more precious þan ony gold or precious stoon, & triacle  
 to lordis & many oþere to aȝenstonde þe fend & hise.  
 & þis bileue stondiþ in þis, þat no man shulde sue oþer pope  
 ne bishop ne ony aungel but in as myche as he sueþ crist, for  
 crist is boþe god & man. & þis bileue wolde teche lordis to  
 purge þer reumes of anticrist; & siþen þei han many skiles  
 þat prestis shulden not be þus dowid, boþe bi þe olde lawe  
 & þe newe, & bi þe lif þat crist ledde, þey shulden be heere  
 hardy in bileue & lette þis dowing of anticrist, & neþer  
 obesche to pope ne bishop but ȝif þey tauȝten þat þey sueden  
 crist in þis. & seyntis þat þey kunnen alegge shulden neþer  
 be heere suyd ne trowid, but ȝif it be tauȝt þat þei sueden  
 crist in þat þat þey helden wiþ þis dowing. & siþen lordis han  
 conscience her-of & it is synne to do aȝenus conscience, þey

True men de-  
 light to repeat,  
 that no man  
 should be fol-  
 lowed, save as  
 far as he follows  
 Christ.

Lords who be-  
 lieved this would  
 stop endowment.

\*[p. 196 MS.]

Christ always gave a reasonable answer to questions.

Priests should not obey pope or bishop without Christ's authority.

Kings should appoint prelates.

All these evils come from folly of the clergy and sloth of lords.

shulden axe of popis & prelatis hou þey grounden þis in crist. & ȝif þey wolen not or kunnen not, in þat þey shewen þat þey ben foolis to holde þis & lyue þer-aftir, siþ it is not groundid vpon crist. & ȝif þey seyn þat crist groundiþ it to be don of his vikeris, shewe þey where & in what maner, & þanne þer conscience is clerid. & ȝif þey \*gabben or feynen heere men shulden not trowe hem in þis, but haue hem suspect of errour, siþ þey suen not crist in þis. for crist was neuere axid questioun þat ne he suyde his godhed & made aseep vpon resoun to hem þat axiden þis questioun of hym. & þus shulden kyngis axe þe pope hou he groundiþ þis dowing on crist, & to robbe þus reumes, & to make hym prelatis at his wille, siþ crist tauȝte his apostlis to chese mathy bi lot. & þis principle of bileue shulden prestis holde & lerne goddis lawe, & not obesche to pope or bishop but in þat þat crist groundiþ it; & in þis cause þey may chalenge help of þer erþely lord, & ȝif hem faylide help heere, be redy to suffer martirdom. & ciprian made þis lawe, & it is in þe popis bokis, þat crist onely shulde be herd in þat þat he spekiþ moost principaly. & þus siþ neþer popis ne bischopis kunnen grounde bi crist þis curatis offiss, ne þat þey shulden þus make p̄reouns, þe chirche shulde aȝenstonde hem & turne aȝen to goddis lawe in þe lyuyng of curatis. & it falliþ to kyngis heere to ordeyne þes prelatis bi goddis lawe, for þey shulden quykene þe kyngis puple & helpe þat þe kyng ledde not deuels. & siþ þis is þe fouleste offiss þat men han heere in erþe, kyngis shulden helpe & mayntene þer curatis aȝenus anticrist & hise; & þus ȝif þis bileue of poul were wisely suyd of clerkis & defendid of worldly lordis, as þey ben holdun to defende it, errours of reumes shulden be destried þat ben brouȝt in bi anticrist. for wise curatis shulden aȝenstonde it & secular lordis shulden mayntene hem, & þus noon errour in goddis lawe reyngnyþ but for foly of clerkis, & for slouþe of worldly lordis þat helpen not heere aȝenus þe fend. & þus of alle worldly godis þat clerkis han in þer hond, boþe clerkis & pore men shulden be lordis of þes godis, for þey shulden

lyue in grace & haue of hem þat hem nedij; & no drede þes Lordship of the  
 two shulden be goostly lordis & not worldly. & many men spiritual, as is  
 may be to-gedere þus goostly lordis of o þyng, & haue vss þat that of the saints  
 acordij to hem of þe same þyng wiþ-outen chiding, as seyntes in heaven.  
 þat ben in heuene han vss of alle þes worldly godis, but þey  
 wasten not þes godis but han ioie þat goddis wille is don of  
 hem; & þis is þe freest vss þat men han off worldly godis.  
 & þus ȝif þis principle of bileue were wel practisid of þe  
 chirche, goddis lawe shulde turne aȝen & mannus lawe shulde  
 be dispisid, for no dedis shulden be acceptid but ȝif þey ben  
 groundid in cristis lawe, & so alle maner of men \*shulden \* [p. 20 MS.]  
 stonde in ground of crist & his lawe.

### Capitulum 31<sup>m</sup>.

i t were for to wite ouer þis hou cristis chirehe is disseyued  
 bi suppiyng of vikeris, & þes persouns ben absent þe Absent curates  
 while. for þes persouns moten nedis serue crist or in and their vicars.  
 doynge wel or in sufferinge, & herfore þey han of cristis  
 chirche þer large hire of goddis godis. ech siche persoun mut The curate is  
 nedis answers bi resoun to god for alle his sheep, but mannus responsible for  
 lawe bigiliþ not god to answers þus for herdis offiss, & his flock,  
 þerfore it mut be groundid in goddis lawe to holde þus  
 residense bi vikere. but it semyþ certeyn of goddis lawe þat and by God's law  
 noon may teche þis bi resoun to be þus herde of þes sheep, himself.  
 & to be þus absent fro hem; & herfore it semyþ not but to be  
 a feynyng of þe fend. & þerfore þis herdis floc may reasonably The flock may  
 wiþ-drawe his hire for he trauelij not on hem bi þat lawe withdraw his  
 þat he axij his hire. & cursing is a fendis fynding to curse hire if he neglects  
 men þus for worldly godis; for þanne hauyng of þes godis his work.  
 is more desirid þan blessing of þer sheep; but who may holde To curse for  
 charite & þus chese þis worldly hauyng? for a man shulde loue tithes shows  
 more his sheep þan alle his godis or his body, siþ he shulde more care for  
 putte his lif for his sheep, as crist dide. & þis moneþ many money than for  
 men to sette litil bi siche cursing; for whanne man curseþ vn- the flock.

To employ a vicar  
does not excuse  
the curate to  
God.

Prayer and study  
alone are not the  
work of a curate.

\*[p. 206 MS.]

A parson that  
does his duty  
may be some-  
times absent.

Hirelings say  
that if a parson  
may be absent  
a few days, why  
not more?

Hard to blame a  
man who absents  
himself to study  
God's law.

skilefully, he cursiþ hym silf & not his sheep. also þre offiss  
of goostly herde moten haue his præsence wiþ his sheep; for  
who can præche to his sheep, or defende hem fro wolues, or  
heeke hem as curatis shulden, but ȝif he be present wiþ his  
sheep? & þus siche residense bi viker makiþ hym to leese  
herdis offiss & þis excusiþ hym not to god, ne his seruyes  
in þe mene tyme makiþ hym herde of þes sheep, ne worþy  
to take þis hire of god. ȝif he waste tyme in þis absence  
& profite not to hooly chirche, þys los of tyme accusiþ hym  
bifore crist, þe firste herde. ȝif he do good to þe chirche in  
preiying or in studiynge, leue, what is þis to herdis offiss, al  
ȝif it dispose men þerto. men may wel ȝyue to siche þer almes,  
but not as to herdis of hem. & siþ god hatiþ falsed of men,  
þis shulde not be don bifore god. & siþ a man in no staat  
shulde do ouȝt þat he shamede to do bifore god, it semyþ þat  
no man shulde holde þis offiss & be absent in his body.  
& þus men ben not contynuel herdis for þe tyme þat þey ben  
absent & kepen not þer sheep bi þer præsence, al ȝif þey  
profiten to þes men. for \*ech man þat is in grace profitiþ to  
ech able man goostly, & þus ech siche were herde of ech, but  
þis abusioun were to straunge. ȝif a man be presently ny; his  
sheep, & fayle not to fede hem & to defende hem & to gresse  
hem in tyme, his bodily præsence is skileful to hym to dwelle  
vpon þes sheep. & þus þe person þat al þe wouke disposiþ hym  
to præche to his sheep or to defende hem & gresse hem, so  
þat his absense be resonable, dwelliþ a shepparde al þis tyme;  
& his præsence doiþ his cure & counfortiþ his sheep & febliþ  
þer enemyes. & as glotouns arguen þat bi þe same skile þey  
may ete more til þat þey han etun to myche, so hirid hynes  
arguen heere þat, bi þe same skile þat þey may be absent fro  
þes sheep foure dayes or<sup>1</sup> fyue, þey may be absent for a  
moneþe or an half ȝeer or more tyme: & þis resoun haþ more  
colour of herdis þat studien in scole. & y can-not answer  
heere ȝif men studien goddis lawe, & in þe mene tyme failen



not to *þer* sheep in þingis þat perteynen to *þer* offiss. but for bodily residence of an able herde vpon his sheep is more sikir þan sicke absence, it is good to chese þe sikers. also as poulseijþ, ech man shal bere his oune charge, & þus þe viker of þis herde is chargid for his oune persons as myche as he may bere, hou berijþ he þe persons charge? For in tyme of apostlis þat iurisdiction was not brouȝt in, but oon shulde preche in o tyme & an-oþer in an-oþer; alle þes weren persons of þes sheep & he þat more tauȝte was betere curat. & þus it semyþ þat it shulde be of many persones of o parijs, & þat persons þat profitijþ more is betere herde to þis parijs. for ellis men myȝten feyne falsly as many herdis as þey wolden, & echoon to pile þe puple where oon sufficid for hem alle. as prest & viker & person, official, erchedekene & bischop, wiþ many men bitwixe hem, ben ful chargious to þe parijs, & þei alle don not þe offiss þat a good herde shulde do; but sicke charging of þe chirche shulde be fled as greet synne. for it is nouȝt to bigile god & make an vnhablen persons þat can-not on herdis cure but his sheep kunnen gouerne hym, al ȝif he gedere bi a proctour þe fruytis, as offeringis & dymes. for ellis a child or a greke or what offis þat he bars myȝte be persons heere in englond ȝif þe pope hadde ȝouyn hym leue, but sicke þat is not goddis orde-naunse excusijþ not at domes day.

But it is safer to reside.

In apostolic times there were no limitations to special cures.

Parishes are burdened by the many grades of clergy and officials.

If all a person need do is to gather the tithes by a proctor, a child or a Greek might be parson.

### Capitulum 32<sup>m</sup>.

b y þis sentence may men se hou þis prelacye is perelous for it is not fully groundid in crist \*ne in oþer of his

lawis. for þe fend haþ mouyd men bi pride & bi coueytise forto bihete þat þey wolen do more þan þey han power or wit to do; for take þou hede to oure popis, to bischops & to oure persons, and þey reken litil of þer charge hou myche it be & hou large, so þat hem come wyunnyng & worldly worship bi þer staat. & so sijþ þe

[p. 21 MS.] The devil moves men to undertake more than they can do.

They do not care how great their charge is if they can make money by it.

staat of *prelacye* takij sumwhat of goddis lawe & sumwhat of *mannus* lawe *contrarie* to goddis lawe, trewe men shulden purge his staat & lyue clene bi goddis lawe. for *saracenes* wiþ *opere* sectis holden myche of cristis lawe, but *opere* lawis þat þey meddlen maken his sect displese to god; & god woot wher straunge lawis ben meddlid more vndir oure pope wiþ cristis lawe þan þey ben meddlid in *opere* sectis. it semyþ þat *prestis* þat kepen parijschis shulden teche hem þe gospel of crist boþe bi lif & bi word, & moue hem to holde charite, & bisie hem not in *opere* þingis neþer of þe world ne *mannus* lawe, & make obediense to þer *prelati*s as myche as goddis lawe techij. fode & hiling moten þey haue; & it is skileful þat þer parijs fynde hem þese bi title of almes, & take þey no more hede to dymes. but his lif mut nedis be brougt in bi litil & litil for *anticrist*. & his lore were good to *persouns*, to yyue no tribut to þer *prelati*s & make no straunge dispensis but jif goddis lawe mouyde þer-to. for alle þes dispensis at þe laste moten be gederid of pore men; & *certis* his is a foul offis of a *prest* to robbe his puple to yyue to bischop or erchedekene godis þat god biddij not. as *senage* & *procurasies*, & *opere* *tributis* þat ben feyned, ben not groundid in goddis lawe & þerfore men shulden dispise hem. yyuyng of *taliage* to þe kyng is licly groundid in goddis lawe, for crist þaf mekely to þe emperour tribut, as þe gospel seiþ, but he þaf not to þe hye bischops ne pharisees ne saducees. but sicke *curatis* moten arme hem wiþ help of god & of trewe men, for cursingis & suspendingis wolen renne *ajenus* sicke *curatis*. siþ bischops of ierusalem maden crist be cursid & suspendid for þey seiden he was not on goddis half but wiþ belsebub a prince of deuels, & þey puttiden men out of synagoge þat confessiden crist apertly, & aftir þei suspendiden hym in þe cros ful felly. þis hangyng vp vsid nou is not so fel but fals ynow; for þey wolen hange vp treuþe & mayntenyng of goddis lawe; & þei ponderen wiþ þis suspending þat þei don it for rijtwisenesse to teche *curatis* obedience & meke-

Saracens hold much of Christ's law, but have mixed other laws with it.

So have the popes.

Priests should be kept in food and clothing by the parish, and care no more about tithes.

The people are robbed to pay fees.

It is lawful to pay taxes to the king.

Good curates must expect persecution.

They may be suspended;

nesse bi goddis lawe, & al þis is falsly feyned bi anticristis  
 \*ipocrisie. but trewe prestis shulden trowe heere þat neþer [p. 21b MS.]  
 þe word of þer prelat ne þe word of þer somenour han so  
 myche maliss wiþ hem þat ne þey may preche & serue god but they should  
preach in spite  
of suspension.  
 aftir þis suspending. & þe moost harm þat þei don is priuynge  
 or aleyng; & þis shulden curatis mekely suffers, for þis wolde  
 turne hem to myche good. & summen tellen wiþ myche  
 declaring þat ground of þis heþen custom springiþ in þe The pope is at the  
bottom of this  
heathen custom.  
 chirche of þe pope & of þe floo groundid on hym. & ȝit þis  
 man bi ipocrisie seiþ þat he sueþ nexst crist of alle þe men  
 heere in erþe, & haþ moost power of crist & of feynynge of þis He claims to re-  
present Christ;  
 power; hou he presentiþ cristis persone & passiþ alle cristis  
 apostlis in graunting of priuylegies & pardoun, it passiþ many  
 mennus wit for greetnesse of þis power. & summen seyn þat  
 þis speche falliþ not fro fendis gabbing but ȝif þe pope speke but it must be by  
contraries (as a  
mount is so called  
from moving).  
 bi þe contrarie, as a mount haþ his name of mouyng, for  
 among alle men in erþe þis ipocrite lyueþ ferrest fro crist.  
 crist hadde not propre good wher-ȝynne he shulde reste his Contrasts be-  
tween Christ and  
the pope.  
 hed; men seyn þis pope haþ more þan half of þe empire  
 wiþ-uten his spuyling. crist was moost meke & moost  
 seruysable & girte hym wiþ a cloþ & wayschide his disciplis  
 feet, as þe gospel of ioon telliþ; þe pope sittiþ in his troone  
 & makij lordis to kisse his feet. crist wente mekely fro plase  
 to place & prechide þe gospel & tauȝte pouert; þe pope  
 dwelliþ in aunoun & doiþ not þis but þe contrarie. & so Pope dwells  
at Avignon:  
 siþ þat anticrist is he þat is aȝenus crist, it semyþ bi his  
 feyned lif þat he is opyn anticrist. & ȝif he shulde be clepid  
 an hil for stablenesse in þis lif, þis hye hil eclipsiþ þis sunne He is a hill that  
eclipses the sun  
(Christ).  
 & makij wyndis & yuele wederis; for goddis lawe is lettid  
 to shyne bi lawis þat þis hil vsiþ, & coolding fro charite  
 makij stormes bi þis hil; but grace of god haþ helpid men God has helped  
man to cleave  
this hill.  
 to cleue þis hil & make it knowun, & god contynue his help  
 heere & make his lawe to shyne frely. Amen.

Explicit tractatus de officio pastoralis.

## XXVIII.

## DE PAPA.

I HAVE no doubt that this tract is genuine. Besides the presumption in its favour from its occurrence in the Ashburnham MS., the internal evidence is very strong. Not only the views are Wyclif's; the arguments and illustrations are such as he frequently uses in his authentic writings. Thus the mention of a cord and a man's neck (p. 476), as examples of things good in themselves that may be bad in combination, is to be found also in the Trialogus (p. 306).

The date of the tract is probably about 1380. The reference to the doctrine of Transubstantiation shows that Wyclif had already made up his mind on this point, but the Schism is spoken of (Chapter II.) in a tone which implies that it was still recent. Spencer's Crusade was not yet on foot, or we should have had some notice of it.

How far Wyclif had gone in opposition to the formal organization of the Church is shown by his assertion (Chapter v.) that neither tonsure, dress, nor bishop's words make the priest, but power given by Christ. The development of the same thought in Chapter xi. shows that this is no hasty outburst, but a deliberate expression of opinion.

Copied from the Ashburnham MS. MM.

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## De Papa.

\*[p. 25 MS.]

\**Capitulum primum.*

[Jer. xxv. 4.]  
God sent his prophets to declare his law, but men would not hear.

Prov. i. [20-28.]

Some priests think they are bound to teach God's law.

Christ was the poorest of men, and Peter followed him.

The devil has got the clergy to hold lordship.

god seiþ bi ieremye þat he wakide eerly to his puple & criede his lawe bi his prophetis, þat weren martrid in goddis cause & for profit of his chirche, boþe for clerkis, lordis & comyns. but god seiþ by salomon þat his wisdom cryeþ in stretis but men dispisen his counsel & wolen not lyue bi his lore, & þerfore god shal leyze in þe tyme þat þey shulen perische; þanne þei shulen crie to hym & he shal not here & spede hem. þus god moueþ many men in tyme of grace to telle his lawe; & ȝit anticrist dispisiþ it & lordis ben neegligent in þer help. & for prestis faylen heere on þer syde, as oþere men don, summe prestis þenken þat þey shulden crye & telle goddis lawe to þe puple; for it may falle þat þey boþe shulen perische for þer neegligense. ground of cristenmennus bileue seiþ þat crist is god & man, & was porereste man of lif & mekerste & moost vertuous. cristenmen taken ouer þat petre was cristis viker, & suyde hym in maner of lif & tauȝte þe chirche bi his lore. þe fend hadde enuye to crist & oþere men þat suyden hym, & temptide prestis to worldly lordchipis as he temptide crist in his persone &, as he liȝede in þis tempting & seyde þat he wolde ȝyue to crist alle þe reumes of þe world so þat he wolde loute hym, so bi craft of his lesingis he haþ getun lordchip to clerkis. so þat nou myche of þis world holdiþ on anticristis syde; as many seyen þat þe pope shulde bi vertu of cristis lif be seculer lord of al þis world, & bi his leene kyngis ben lordis. & þe fendis part is heere so strong & colourid wiþ so many cautels þat fewe men doren putte hem out to stonde & speke for goddis cause. but ȝit men trowen, as þei doren, þat crist chees to be pore to ȝyue ensaumple to his prestis & oþere men to triste in god, & leue to triste in

his world for þey moten dye & leene it. & petre was pore  
 after crist, & alle þe apostlis but scarioth, for he wolde be  
 riche & haue in propre, & þis brouȝt hym to double deȝ.  
 but þe fend haȝ blyndid men, boȝe clerkis & lordis, in þe  
 chirche þat þey bileuen þe contrarye; & þis defaute in bileue  
 reuersiȝ cristenmennus lif, & lettij hem to sue crist. for þe  
 fend coueytij myche to quenche bileue in þe chirche, for þis  
 is þe firste vortu & ground of cristis religioun. & for þe pope  
 is holdun moost & nexst viker of iesu crist, þerfore þe fend  
 in þe pope haȝ gederid many worldly poyntis \*boȝe of  
 lordchip & worldly lif, & castij to disseyue þe chirche by  
 hym. For manye taken as bileue þat he may not do amys,  
 but what þing þat he grauntij or seiȝ crist mut conferme it;  
 & bi þis cautel of þe fend ben many men dampnyd to helle.  
 & ground of al þis disseyt is lesing contrarye to treuȝe;  
 for as þe fend disseyuede eue bi lesing þat she shulde not dye,  
 whanne god hadde seyde þat she shulde dye what day þat she  
 eet of þe appul, so þe fend disseyueȝ þe chirche bi oon as opyn  
 lesing, þat crist was heere worldly lord-moost hye of alle  
 opere, & so shulde his viker be þat is clepid þe pope of rome.  
 but whanne crist was temptid heere he seyde: "go, satanas."  
 to teche alle cristenmen hou þat crist wolde be pore; & ȝit  
 þer ben fewe men þat wolen defende þis bileue, for anticrist  
 haȝ many clerkis þat maken it derk bi many weyes.

The devil has brought together  
 \* [p. 254 M.A.] many deceits in the Pope.

Many believe that the Pope cannot err.

People are led to believe that Christ held worldly lordship, and that the Pope should do so.

### Capitulum 2<sup>m</sup>.

i t wers to wite ouer hou god shewij loue to his chirche  
 bi dynysoun of þes popis þat is nou late fallun. oure  
 bileue techij bi poul þat alle þingis fallen to good  
 to goddis children þat dreden hym, & þus shulden cristenmen  
 take hem. þe firste bok of goddis lawe tellij hou  
 god manaasside þe fend: "y shal putte enemyte," seiȝ god,  
 "bitwixe þee & womman, & bitwixe þy seed & heere seed,  
 & she shal al to-squatte þyn heed." & so taken summen þat

God's love to his Church shown in the Great Schism.

Rom. viii. [28.]

[Gen. iii. 15.]

Some men think that in answer to prayer he has thus broken the head of Antichrist.

The Pope is Antichrist since he is opposed to Christ in life and teaching. Christ was poor; the Pope loves riches.

Christ was meek; the Pope is proud.

Christ was familiar;

the Pope shuts himself up in a castle.

Christ went to \*[p. 28 MS.] others; the Pope summons men to come to him.

Christ was busy in preaching; the Pope busies himself in making laws which he sets above Christ's.

Christ gave his life for his flock;

the Pope gives sham absolution to men who do him honour, and so causes death in body and soul to thousands.

Christ prayed for his enemies; the Pope revenges himself both by slaying and cursing.

hooly preyer of þe chirche maad to crist & his modir moneþ hym to sende þis grace doun to departe þe heed of anticrist, so þat his falsed be more knowun. & it semeþ to hem þat þe pope is anticrist heere in erþe. for he is aȝenus crist boþe in lif & in lore. crist was moost pore man fro his birþe to his deþ, & lefte worldly richees & beggyng, aftir þe staat of innocense; but anticrist aȝenus þis, fro þe tyme þat he be maad pope til þe tyme þat he be deed heere, coueytiþ to be worldly riche, & castiþ bi manye shrewid weyes hou þat he may þus be riche. crist was moost meke man & bad lerne þis of hym; but men seyen þat þe pope is moost proud man of erþe, & makij lordis to kysse his feet where crist wayschide his postlis feet. Crist was moost homely man in lif, in dede & in word; men seyen þat þis pope is not nexst crist in þis, for where crist wente on his feet boþe to citees & litil tounnes, þey seyen þis pope wole be closid in a castel wiþ greet aray. Where crist cam to icon baptist to be baptisid of hym, þe pope sendiþ \*aftir men to come to hym where euere he be; ȝe, ȝif crist haue sumnyd hem for to come not to hym. crist bicliptide ȝonge & pore in tokene of his homelynesse; men seyen þat þe pope wole biclippe worldly worchip, & not trewe men for goddis sake lest he vnworchiþe hym silf. crist was bisy to preche þe gospel not for his worldly worchip ne wyunnyng; men seyen þat þe pope leeneþ þis, but he wole gladly make a lawe & make þis lawe in more worchip & more dredē þan cristis lawe. crist louede so myche his floo þat he puttide his lif for hem, & sufferide sharp payne & deþ for to brynge hem to blis; men seyen þat þe pope loueþ so myche worchip of þe world, þat he wole feyne asoyling to men to go streyt to heuene, so þat þey do a trauel þat sounneþ to his worldly worchip. & so his folý may be cause of deþ of many þousynd men boþe in body & in soule, but hou sueþ he crist in þis? crist was so pacient & so myche sufferide his oune wrong, þat he preyede for his enemyes & tauȝte his postlis to take no veniaunce; men seyen þat þe pope of rome wole be vengid on alle maners, boþe bi



sleyng & bi cursing & oþere peynes þat he feyneþ. crist Christ taught men to imitate his life;  
 tauhte men to lyue wel bi his oune lif & his wordis, for what  
 he tauhte he did in dede, & bad men trowe to his werkis; the Pope says that no other man should live as he should.  
 men seyen þat þe pope goiþ al bi contrarye weye to þis, for  
 his lif is not ensauple to oþere men hou þey shulden lyue,  
 for no man shulde lyue lik to hym, as he feyneþ bi his hye  
 staat. crist in ech his dede & his word souhte þe glory of Christ sought God's glory;  
 god, & sufferide many reprocus in his manheed for þis ende; the Pope seeks his own glory.  
 men seyen þat þe pope aȝenward sekiþ his oune glory on alle  
 weyes, ȝe, ȝif goddis worship be lost. & þus he feyneþ many  
 vngroundid gabbingis. & ȝif þis þing & many siche ben soþe  
 of þe pope of rome, he is very anticrist & not cristis viker  
 heers.

### Capitulum 3<sup>m</sup>

þ is dyuysious of þes popis may turne to good of many The Schism may teach men to obey Popes only as they follow Christ.  
 reumes, þat men trowe to noþer of hem but, for loue of  
 iesu crist, in as myche as þey suen crist in þer lif & in þer  
 lore. for ȝif þei gabben of þer staat & seyen þat þei ben  
 cristis vikeris, & þey ben contrarye to hym boþe in lif & in  
 lore, \*þo men þat ben led bi þes wolues moten go þe brode \*[p. 266 MS.]  
 weye to helle; & þis semeþ þe perelous tyme þat poul haþ  
 teld to þe chirche. & þus þis wers a bileue þat ech man Men should follow this rule.  
 shulde grounde hym ynne, þat men shulden trowe to no pope  
 but as he groundiþ hym in crist; & men shulden asaye þis  
 ground, wher it be good wiþ-oute disseyt. & þus what þe  
 pope bade do, but ȝif he tauhte þat crist bade it, men shulden  
 not do þis aftir hym in þat þat he wers cristis viker, for it  
 may falle þat þe fend disseyue men bi anticrist, & chalenge Popes may make excessive claims and cause strife.  
 more þan crist dide & þus bringe strif in cristendom. for þe  
 fend may moue mennus hertis to loue so myche worldly  
 godis þat þey stryue & fȝite to-gidere for departing of þes  
 godis; & þus may anticrist & hise lette men to lyue in pees, They may stir up trouble to hide their tricks.  
 lest þat þis lif in pees make men to knowe his giles. & þus  
 god haþ ordeyned medicyn to knowe falsed of anticrist, þat

he hieþ hym aboue crist, & so ouer god, as poul seiþ.  
 Countries should obeye popes no further than God's law warrants. *proferre reumes to þes popis þat þey wolen obesche to hem in þe foorme of goddis lawe, but no more þan crist axide; & ȝif þey ben not payed her-of, þey shewen þat þey ben anticrist, siþ þe mooste pride of hym is þat he hieþ hym aboue god.*  
 Thus realms would be quit of indulgences. *& ȝif reumes holde þis reule, þanne þey may be dischargid of blasfemes of indulgensis, & of oþere false feynynge; for it may falle þat þe pope graunte to riche worldly men þat þey shulen go streijt to heuene wiþ-oute peyne of purgatorie, & denye þis to pore men, kepe þey neuere so goddis lawe. sicke many giles of þe fend blynden men bi his viker, so þat treuþe of goddis lawe is turnyd in-to þis vikeris falseed. & shortly for to seye, ȝif men stonden bi þis bileue, þe pope shal not take of reumes neþer money ne worldly godis. & herfore seiþ poul, cristis vikere, þat he sekiþ þes grekis soulis & he sekiþ not her godis, but weye to brynge hem to blis. & no drede þus doiþ crist to alle reumes þat ben his children, for he robbiþ not his children, but ȝyueþ hem alle maner godis, boþe goostly godis & worldly. & þus dide crist heere in erþe, & ȝif þe pope passe heere crist & robbe his children as a wolf, no drede he is anticrist & opynly þe fendis viker. & ȝif þou seyst þe pope mut haue godis of reumes to saue his \*staat, he shulde be pore, as crist was, & charge not men, as crist dide not. þis reule shulde teche men where a prelat were anticrist, & hou þey shulden obesche to hym, & in what þing leue his lore.*

\*[p. 27 MS.]

### Capitulum 4<sup>m</sup>.

Christian men should choose their prelates and love them. *s iþen ech seculer cristenman shulde willefully chese his prelat, & loue hym bi goddis lawe as men louyden in þe firste staat, þat was staat of innocense, as alle men shulden haue louyd þanne, & men shulen loue in staat of blis, for þere shal loue be at þe full; herfore shulden men seke weyes to loue þat man þat shulde be pope. & among causis of loue þe mooste cause þat euere god ordeynede shulde be*

Men should try to love the Pope.

good doying of men; for bi þis cause god makij hym silf  
 louyd, & hem more louyd þat more don good. þe good þat  
 þe pope shulde do shulde be lore to come to heuene, & so þis  
 pope mut kunne þis lore ouer oþere þat ben his sheep; & siþ To earn their  
love he must  
teach God's law.  
 þis lore is fully tauȝt in goddis lawe, as we bileuen, þis pope  
 mut passingly kunne goddis lawe & resoun þer-of. but nou  
 in þe reume of england stryuen manye of þe sacrid oost. Discussions as to  
the nature of the  
host.  
 summe seyen þat þis oost fro þe tyme þat it be sacrid is  
 verily goddis body & þer-wiþ breed, whit & round; & in þis  
 weye stonden lewid men boþe more & lesse, & longe han don.  
 oþere seyen þat þis oost is nouȝt or an accident, þe which þey  
 kunnen not nemyn to men, but it is not goddis body. þis  
 question shulden reumes sende to þe pope, to knowe his wit, Countries should  
make the Pope  
say what he  
thinks on this  
matter.  
 what we shulden trowe of þis oost fro þe tyme þat it be  
 sacrid; & here-ynne shulde he not feyne but teche bi þe  
 gospel or bi resoun what men shulden bileue heere, or ellis he  
 were no witty pope. & þes reumes shulden take no man to  
 þer pope bfore þat tyme þat he hadde tauȝt hem wel heere  
 by good ground of goddis lawe. For wel we witen þat he  
 kan heere no skile but of cristis word; but crist, whanne he  
 blesside þis breed, seyde þat "þis is my body"; & we Christ said the  
bread was his  
body.  
 bileuen þat crist liȝde neuere, but seyde euere soþ to greet  
 witt. & ȝif fourȝ sectis in þis lond seyen heere soþ of þe The four sects  
say that the pope  
holds it to be an  
accident without  
subject.  
 popis lawe, he haþ seyde many hundrid wynter þat þis oost is  
 not goddis body, but accident wiþ-oute suȝet. & ȝif reumes  
 leuen þis lore & taken hem anticrist to pope, he may make  
 hem to bileue what euere he wole bi litil & litil; for hooly  
 chirche haþ bileuyd þis þousinde \*wynter & more to, þat [p. 276 MS.]  
 þis oost is goddis body in foorme of breed, & wyn his blood.  
 & trewe men shulden knowe heere þat þis poynt is not so hye  
 þat ne þey may wite þe soþe, & knowe it betere þan oþere  
 poyntis þat crist haþ tauȝt in oure bileue. heere may  
 cristenmen soone wite which clerk or lord loueþ treuþe & haþ  
 wille to stonde þerfore & suffere a magrey ȝif he shulde.  
 & certis þat pope þat fayliþ heere oþer for kunnyng or for If so, he is unfit  
to be Pope.  
 wille is vnhabile to take to pope & lede his flocc bi goddis

No harm in discussing this truth.

Lords should give no alms to priests who do not teach the truth in this.

It is idolatry to bow down before an accident.

lawe. & what sect grucchiþ ænens þis is suspect of heresye, for what shulde it harme ony man þat þis treuþe were wel discussid. but it were good to cristenmen to laste in þer olde bileue, þat þis breed is goddis body & þis wyn is goddis blood, & not an vnknowun þing wiþ-oute resoun or autorite; for men shulden holde þer olde bileue but if þe contrarye were wel tauþte. & þus it were a blessid dede þat lordis wolden not ȝyue þer almes neþer to o prest ne oþer, bifore þey tauþten bi good witnesse what þing were þis sacrid oost, boþe in his kynde & in figure, by maner þat þe gospel spekiþ. & þus if god wolde fouche-saf, hooly chirche shulde be purgid of heresyen in þis mater, aboute which þey dispenden myche, as in prestis þat syngen masse; & certis it were ydolatrye to loute þus an accident. & no man durste seye til nou þat accident is goddis body, for þis newe word may haue no ground, & was not knqwun þat þousinde ȝeer þat sathanas was boundun in helle, & ȝit he shameþ to seye þis gabbing.

### Capitulum 5<sup>th</sup>.

Antichrist fears b that his clerks will lose honour

and the Church, that has been long growing, will be destroyed.

This means that Christ's law was a failure.

ut heere grucchiþ anticrist & dredith þat manye of his clerkis shulen waste þer worldly worship, & þus his lordchip shal be lesse. for if goddis lawe were kept clene wiþ-oute þe fendis lawe, & þe ordenaunse of crist were clene wiþ-outen anticristis, where shulden þes foure sectis be lordis as þey nou ben? & þus þe chirche were destried þat haþ be so longe in growing. Heere han trewe men seyde ofte þat þis is a fendis resoun, as if þe arguers wolde mene þat crist faylide in his lawe & in his ordenaunse which he ordeynede in þe chirche, & þus men menen alle in dede þat ben of þes foure sectis. but, lord, where is vnbeleue in heretik but if þis be oon? & þus it semeþ þat alle þes foure smaochen sumwhat of heresye, & þey louen not iesu crist, for þey haten þus his lawe. but poul seiþ a soþ word þat \* "who euere loueþ not iesu crist he is cursid of god,

1 Cor. xvi. [22.]

\*[p. 28 MS.]

& puttid fro hym as heretik." & so þe mooste inconuenient  
 þat anticrist kan bringe of þis is þat cristis lawe were holdun  
 clene wiþ-outen anticristis; but þis fruyt were blessid &  
 profitable to þe chirche. for þis kepte crist in his apostlis,  
 & þanne cam þe chirche to heuene & growide in vertus  
 heere in erþe; & siþen haþ it sunkun doun. þanne shulden  
 cristenmen knowe þe vertu of crist & of his lawe; hou þat he  
 is god almyȝty & his lawe is fully ynow; & þanne shulden  
 men wite aftir hou oþere lawes, þat men han foundun, harmen  
 þe chirche many weyes, & maken goddis lawe lesse louyd.  
 For keping of þes newe lawis occupieþ mennus witt & wille,  
 & axiþ of hem a bisy trauel, & þus þey letten goddis lawe.  
 & þus ȝif anticristis lawe were good, ȝit cristis lawe mut  
 nedis be betere & sufficient in hym silf; & þus þe toþer is  
 to myche & doiþ harm in cristis chirche, & lettij cristis  
 lawe to be suyd. & þus bringing in of þes lawis, þat lettij  
 þe vse of cristis lawe, is þe mooste priuey synne þat þe  
 fend haþ foundun aȝenus þe chirche. & so þis blessid word  
 wolde sue, þat foure sectis newe foundun shulden be voydid  
 fro þe chirche, as þey shulen not come to blis. for alle þes  
 sectis han mannis signes, & ȝif þes signes weren fully stryed,  
 þes sectis weren þanne destried, as men seyen þat ben weddid  
 wiþ hem. but it is not so of cristis sect ne of prestis þat  
 crist ordeynede. for ioon baptist was a prest, as alle men  
 in heuene shulen be prestis. for crounne & cloþ maken no  
 prest, ne þe emperours bischop wiþ his wordis, but power þat  
 crist ȝyueþ; & þus bi lif ben prestis knowun. & þus cristen-  
 men shulden not lette for þe drede of þe fend & for power of  
 his clerkis to sue & holde cristis lawe. but wel y woot þat  
 þis chirche haþ be many day in growing, & summe clepen it  
 not cristis chirohe, but þe chirche of wickid spiritis. & dauyþ  
 hatide þis chirohe as ech cristenman shulde do. & man may  
 no betere knowe anticristis clerk þan bi þis, þat he loueþ  
 þis chirche & hatij þe chirche of criste; & ȝif þe pope be an  
 heed to mayntene þis chirche aȝenus crist, he is opyn anticrist  
 & no part of cristis chirche. & ȝif \*he & his secte be voyde \*

The worst that  
 would happen  
 would be the  
 keeping of  
 Christ's law.

New laws hurt  
 the Church,

and hinder God's  
 law.

These sects owe  
 their being to  
 human inven-  
 tions.

Neither crown,  
 dress, nor ordi-  
 nation makes the  
 priest.

[Psalm xxvi. 5.]

[p. 284 MS.]

Luke xi. [25.]

fro cristis lawe, & clensid wiþ besumms, & maad fair wiþ sensible signes, þanne þe fend haþ a tokene to dwelle homely wiþ þes men; for þes ben wordis of crist, þe whiche moten nedis be trewe. & þus shulde anticrist drede of þe word þat crist seiþ aftir, þat þis kynrede of prestis is þe worste of alle oþere. for many men trowen heere þat as prestis in þe olde lawe, fro þe time of machabees vnto þat þei hadden alayn crist, weren þe worste kynrede þat god sufferide þanne to lyue; so aftir cristis steying, if prestis leeuene cristis lawe & bicomene reuleris of þis world by newe lawis þat þey han shapun, þis is nou þe worste kynrede þat is on lyue heere in erþe.

Priests that bear secular rule are the worst of men.

### Capitulum 6<sup>thum</sup>.

Antichrist urges that the Pope would be poorer than an English bishop.

it anticrist argueþ þat if þis sentense wente forþ, þe pope were as pore a man as ony bischop of englond; but þis were aȝenus resoun, þat þe hiers man shulde be byneþe.

Christ was the poorest of men.

Heere men seyen to anticrist þat he argueþ aȝenus crist, & þerfore cristenmen moten nede answers sharply heere for crist; for if þis folý wente forþ, siþ crist was moost pore man & his apostlis pore aftir, þey weren leest worþ in þis world. but what blasfeme durste seye þus, siþ it is aȝenus bileue. & þus goddis lawe techiþ þat willeful pouert of a prest, if he haue mekenesse in his soule & oþere vertues more þan oþere, he is herby more to god, & þis hyennesse shulden prestis coueyte. & þus alle prestis of englond shulden be pore men, as þe pope, for þey moten forsake þer richees if þey wolen be cristis prestis. for bileue techiþ wel þat crist bad his prestis be siche; & we fynden neuere bi resoun þat crist chaungide euere his wille. & siþ crist is god in heuene, it is ful hard to reuerse his lawe, for no drede men moten rikene þerfore at þe day of dom. & heere men aliden out of bileue, boþe prestis & seculeris, whanne þey tellen more bi a cronycle of folý of an emperour þan þey tellen bi cristis lawe, þat is emperour of heuene. & þe fend confermeþ his part, & makiþ

Men slide out of belief by listening to chronicles instead of Christ's law.

seyntis be canonysed, þe whiche resseyueden siche dowyng, to proue þat þis was wel don. but heere men knowen þe fendis cautels, & sliden not fro bileue for þis; for canonysing of þes seyntis is not bileue of cristenmen. & þus þif þes ben seyntes in heuene, þis is bi vertu of crist þat þey turnyden at þe laste to hym, & hadden sorowe for þer synne. & þif þou axe prof her-of, we seyen þat þif þou proue þat þes be seyntis, it wole sue of ours bileue þat þes seyntis sorowiden þus, þif þey weren worldly men þus, for ellis þey myȝten not come to heuene. But myraclis maad of deed men ben þe fendis euydense; for god may suffre \*þe fend to do siche signes & many mo. for ellis wolde not poul seye þat a man myȝte remoue hillis & þit fayle of charite. but þif þes signes myȝten liztly fayle, stonde we in bileue of crist, & leue we siche signes of þe fend. for bileue is insensible & more trewe þan siche signes; as þis treuþe is insensible þat two & þre maken fyue, & þit it is more certeyn þan ony sensible þing heere. þus bileue of hooly writ passiþ alle þes clepid myraclis. & þus wite wel lordis & reumes þat þey moten nedis answers to god hou þey han holdun his lawe & stondun sad in his bileue. no drede boþe lordis & reumes myȝten wel constreyne prestis to holde þe pouert þat crist ordeynede, for honeste of his prestis & profit of lordis & comyna. & whanne lordis leeuen þis power, þey assenten to þe fend; & þey moten nedis be dampnyd for þis assent but þif þey amenden it, & þis is blynding of þe fend þat þey han grauntid þis almes. & so þey moten be trewe men & algatis mayntene it forþ, for þif men loken hou it cam in, it cam not in bi very almes, but bi blyndnesse of þe world & ipocrisie þat þe fend tauȝte. & euers þe lengers þat it lastiþ, þe more peyne han deed mennus soulis. & þus þe fend stiriþ men to laste in synne aȝenus god; but wite þey wel wiþ þe fend þat god mut nedis be þer lord. þus þif lordis han first be foolis, oþer in dowyng or leeuynge to helpe, þey shulden haue sorowe of þis synne & haaste hem to make aseep. & wite þey wel þat god mut nedis be cheef lord of alle creaturis,

Authority of so-called saints.

If they were saints, they repented of their error.

Miracles of saints no proof. \*[p. 29 MS.]

1 Cor. xiii. [2.]

Sensible signs of less weight than insensible belief.

Necessary truths.

Rulers should make priests be poor.

God is chief lord

and they may not  
grant without his  
leave.

Let rulers amend  
the priests.

\*[p. 296 MS.]

& but þif god graunte hem leene to ryue þus prestis þes worldly godis, þe ȝifte þat þey ȝaue is nouȝt bi vertu of þe cheef lord. & þus anticrist & al his help can neþer argue heere ne answers; & y am certeyn on domes-day no man may answers wel heere. þerfore mende hem lordis & reumes, & serue þei crist for þer goode, for litil seruyss for þis tyme disserueþ myche meede in heuene. lord, siþ lordis & reumes boþe chesen a pope at þer oune wille, what sholde moue hem to chese þis pope more hye þan crist wolde chalenge of men? crist axide noon erþly lordchip ne erþly godis, but ȝaf heuenely, & whanne he tok his oune godis he tok hem for help of his tenauntis, & algatis in sicke a mesure þat he was not charious to hem. & þis lore han freris forȝeten & alle þes oþere newe sectis. þus þe grace \*of god haþ mounyd to trete þis mater among cristenmen, to loke wher þey wolen helpe hem silf whanne god haþ so graciously bigunyn.

### Capitulum 7<sup>m</sup>.

Christ taught  
holiness in the  
heart.

Now a pope or  
prelate must have  
pomp.

þer ben groundis þe whiche crist kepte contrarie to keping of prelati nou. for crist tauȝte þat hoolynesse shulde be hid in mennus hertis & not shewid to þe puple in sensible signes wiþ-out fruyt; for þanne men hopiden reward of god & axiden not glory of þis world. but nou it is turnyd vpsedoun fro religioun þat crist ordeynede, for nou he is neþer pope ne prelat, but ȝif he haue a worldly meyne þat shewe his hyennesse to þe world, as he were a seculer lord, & bi þis gile haþ þe fend brouȝt in þat more prestis shulden haue worldly glorie. & þis makij þe pope & bischops to axe richessis to þer staat; for, as þei seyen, þer staat wolde perische but ȝif sicke richesse shewide it out. first þes prelati blasfemen in crist & in his hooly apostlis. for bileue techij vs þat crist was bischop of mennus soulia, betere bi a þousynd part þan any siþ þe chirche was dowyd, & so weren cristis apostlis betere þan any pope of rome.



For þis name is newe foundun, & it bitokeniþ wundirful; for summe þenken it greet wundir þat worldly glory & hoolynesse shulden be knyttid in o persone; siþ crist forsook it in word & dede, & bi his lore his apostlis, lord, why shulden not prelatis do nou so? & by þis cause haþ þe fend brouȝt yn þat religioun of þes newe ordris shal be shewid in sensible signes, as habitis, & bikenes, & hye housis, & herfore haþ þe fend brouȝt in þat company of many lumpis shal be ioyned to o persone for worldly werchip of þer staat. þus þer ben many cardenals & many men knyttid to hem; myche meyne to a bischop, & manye persones in an ordre, & al is charge to comyn men, & strengþe to þe fendis part. crist ordeynede þat his apostlis fro tyme þat he stayede to heuene shulden be scaterid in many cuntreys & conquere wickid men to crist. wel y rede þat seynt petre dwelte in a corieris hous, but y rede not of cardenal ne page þat he hadde wiþ hym; & þit þis apostle cam to cornely & conuertide hym wiþ opere. & þus may cristenmen lerne boþe of crist & his apostlis þat religioun of crist is not in siche worldly signes. & so men moten oþer denye bileue, or seye þat cristis religioun stondiþ not in siche signes as nou þe chirche is chargid wiþ. soþ it is \*þat seculer prinsis & worldly lordis moten haue siche worldly signes, for þey shulden teche to drede god by austernete & worldly drede. but it is aȝenus cristis wille þat prestis meddle þes two to-gidere, for þey shulden teche bi mekenesse & paciense, as crist dide. & herfore biddiþ god in his lawe þat his men shulden not be clopid in wollun & lynnun partid to-gidere, to teche þis dynersite in figure. crist was boþe kyng & prest, as he is boþe god & man, & þus sum þing falliþ to hym þat no cristenman may come to; but in siche poyntis shulden men lerne to sue bi vertues crist afer, & go not bifore crist, as dide presumption of petre; & þerfore crist clepide hym sathanas & bad petre go aftir hym. crist as a goode maystir hadde twelue apostlis to teche hem; anticrist ordeyneþ many twelue to lyue worldly & charge þe chirche. crist koude ensaunple kynghod &

Pope a new name; means 'wonderful.'

Religion of the new orders shown in sensible signs.

Men are gathered in 'lumps' to the great charge of the Church.

Acts x. [6.] St. Peter lived at a currier's without cardinal or page.

\*[p. 80 MS.] Princes may have worldly splendour.

[Deut. xxii. 11.]

Christ was king and priest. In this none can follow him.

Simony and other  
deceits in cardinals,

who are hinges  
to the fiend's  
house.

presthod in her groundis, but *prestis* þat comen aftir crist ben not able to do so; & þus þey passen þer maystir crist, boþe in presthod & in knyȝthod. & þus ȝif popis wolden haue cardenals, þey shulden chese gode men & pore, & loke þat þey chargide not þe chirche bi costly aray & idilnesse; but nou men seyen þat cardenals ben brouȝt yn bi *anticrist* to bargeyne by symonye, & by oþere disseytis bigile men, & þus as þe pope is wundirful, so cardenals ben an herre to þe fendis hous. & oþere ground han þey noon, but for *anticrist* wole þus.

### Capitulum 8<sup>m</sup>.

Antichrist urges ;  
that priests do  
some good with  
their wealth;

they are of the  
same nature as  
lords, and have  
sense to spend  
money.

Christ wished his  
priests to be out  
of temptation,

\*[p. 306 MS.]

and set an ex-  
ample how they  
should live.

it it were to reherse þe euydensis þat *anticrist* makij þat proue þat it were betere clerkis to be riche þan pore as crist; for bi þis richees þei don sum good, & bi so myche þey ben þe betere. for þey ben of *mannus* kynde, as ben lordis þat han siche godis, & þey han wit to spende þes godis as han oþere, or ellis more. Why shulden not þey be betere bi þes richessis as oþere ben? Heere men seyen to *anticrist* þat wolde affeerme crist a fool, as þe fend helde crist a fool for he wolde not take of hym alle þe reumes of þe world for a litil *seruyss* to hym, þat crist as a good god wolde þat his *prestis* weren in worchip & fer fro perels of þe fend, & þus he forbad to his *prestis* to haue to myche of erþly godis & to myche bisynesse aboute hem; but crist ȝaf hem goostly godis & occupiȝng bi charite. & ȝif we marken staat of *innocense* & staat þat aungels han in heuene, þey shulden not be þus \*oppressid wiþ erþely drit as riche men ben, but þey han more clene lif & more likinge to *mannus* soule. & for þis cause ordeynede crist þat his *prestis* shulden wante þes richessis, & ensaumplide in hym silf & his apostlis hou þey shulden lyue. crist wolde wel þat his *prestis* hadden þe vse of worldly godis as myche as wolde do hem good, but not to myche to lette þer soule, as men shulden bifore synne &

aungels han in þer lif. & bi þis vse men shulden haue  
 goostly lordchip of alle þes godis, & bi þe fruyt of vertues  
 haue delit in her god. & þus crist ordeynede to prestis moost  
 hye staat & moost parfit of alle þre partis of þe chirche, if  
 þat prestis wolden lyue þer-aftir; as crist ȝaf to labboreris  
 worldly godis & trauel also, & crist grauntide to his apostlis  
 to trauele aboute erþly godis, but he forfendide hem to prynte  
 þer soulis to myche wiþ erþly godis. crist grauntide to  
 worldly lordis to haue gouernayle of siche godis, but he  
 grauntide to his prestis to gouerne soulis bi weye of vertues;  
 & þis shulden þey do bi meke wille, & leue lordchip  
 & austernete. & þis he tauȝte in dede & word for loue þat  
 he hadde to his prestis. se we nou þe fendis foly, what he  
 meneþ whanne he argueþ. he wolde mene þat crist was  
 a fool & to scars in leste godis. austyn seiþ ofte-tyme þat  
 þer ben þre godis of man; godis of vertues, & godis of kynde,  
 & godis of fortune, þat ben þe leste. crist ordeynede men  
 to be riche in godis of vertu, for þey ben best; & crist  
 ordeynede godis of kynde as myche as þey shulden serue to  
 þe soule. he ordeynede not so greet a body ne so strong to  
 a man as haþ an hors or oþer beeste, for it wolde do harm to  
 þe soule. crist ordeynede godis of fortune þat wolden suffise  
 to mannis body; & þus he ordeynede godis of vertu wyngis  
 to men to fle to heuene; ant anticrist wolde faste to men  
 godis of fortune bi coueytise, þat shulden drengre a man to  
 helle, & for þis ende he shapiþ þis. wel y graunte þat erþly  
 godis & worldly lordchipis ben gode, for þei ben goddis  
 creaturis & shapun of god for good ende. but godis of vertu  
 ben þe betere þat prestis shulden haue passingly, & more  
 perel is in þe firste godis, & þerfore crist wolde not þat his  
 prestis hadden but litil of þes godis, for perels & letting of  
 betere godis. & heere shulden worldly men take hede, boþe  
 þe lordis \* & þe comyns, þat þey dissusen not worldly godis,  
 but take hem in mesure to þat ende þat crist haþ ordeyned  
 hem to be vsid, & not aȝenus his ordenaunse. crist ȝaf hem  
 not worldly godis to charge his prestis wiþ þis lordchip, ne to

Priests would  
 have the highest  
 and most perfect  
 state if they  
 would keep  
 Christ's rule.

The devil means  
 that Christ was a  
 fool, and too  
 sparing of worldly  
 goods.

Christ ordained  
 man to be rich in  
 goods of virtue;  
 to have enough  
 goods of nature,

and of fortune.

Riches are good  
 as God's crea-  
 tures,

but virtues are  
 better.

Secular men  
 should be careful  
 [p. 31 MS.]  
 not to misuse  
 goods.

Priests are of the same race as lords, but they must not hold lordship or marry.

They should apply their wits to teaching men to live virtuously

stire hem to fleysly synnes, as ben gloterye & lecherye; & if þes two partis of þe chirche foulen þus prestis wiþ þes godis, wite þey wel þat god wole punysche boþe þes partis & his prestis. & þus we graunten þat riche prestis don sum good wiþ þis richees, for so don þe fendis in helle wiþ godis þat crist haþ ȝouyn to hem, but neþeles þey don amys; for þey shulden sette al þer bisynesse þat þey han nou in worldly godis to serue crist bi godis of grace, & þis is a greet defeaute. We graunten þat prestis ben of mannis kynde, as ben lordis & weddid men, but if þey shulden not haue þis lordchip ne kyndely gendrure of children, but if þey wolden leue þis staat & bicomme weddid men, for we bileuen þat maydynhot & goostly gendrure is betere þan þis. & so supposen we þat þes prestis han betere wit þan seculer lordis, aplye þey þis betere wit in betere vae to serue god; as beestis han wit to ete & drynke, but prestis wit shulde not stonde in þis, but hou þey myȝten teche men to lyue in vertues bi goddis lawe. but þis may not prestis do bi robbing of lordis & of comyns of þer lordchip & erfely godis; for þis is aȝenus god & man.

### Capitulum 9<sup>m</sup>.

Antichrist and those that help him should be ashamed.

Worldly lords endowing the clergy are mending Christ's ordinance.

The emperor has been brought down for endowing the Church.

y þis sentence þat heere is seyð shulden anticrist & hisse haue shame to defoule cristis prestis aȝenus þe ordenaunce þat crist made. & worldly lordis & oþere foolis þat helpen anticrist heere shulden haue shame of þis help, as þey shulen shame at domes day; & þis shame shal be more bi colour of ipocrisie, for þey seyen in þes dedis þat þey don þus for cristis worship. for crist ordeynede amys, but worldly lordis amendididen hym, as þe emperour of rome whanne he made his prestis lordis he amendidide þe apostlis staat ouer þe ordenaunce of crist. but al þis smacchiþ blasfemye & wole bringe þes lordis doun, as þe emperours staat is lesse for þis dede aȝenus crist. For no man may do aȝenus crist but if he

be punysshid for þis dede, but punysshing of mannes soule is  
 more to drede þan worldly harm. & þus anticrist \*myȝte not \*[p. 315 MS.]  
 for shame canonyse þis emperour; for it is knowun þing to  
 men þat þis emperour reuerside crist. & it semeþ to many  
 men þat o cause why he dide þus was to hye his oune prestis,  
 wiþ oþer blynd deuocioun; so þat as þe emperour passide One of Constantine's motives was that his priest might be distinguished above those of other lords.  
 oþere worldly lordis, so shulde his prest of rome & hise passe  
 oþere lordis prestis. & to þis wit he made hym lord of rome  
 & myche of his empire, & made hym & his cardenals ride  
 in reed on hye ors; for hym þouȝte shame þat his clerkis  
 shulden not passe clerkis of oþere lordis, but as he passide  
 hem bi his empire, so his prest shulde passe oþere. & certis  
 þis were an yuel ground to canonyse þis man in heuene; as it He ought not to be canonized.  
 were no good cause to charge þe chirche to halewe hym, al þif  
 he seyde þat þif he sawe a prest lie bi a womman he wolde  
 hile hem wiþ his mentile, & not sclauendre hem of þis synne.  
 þif þis emperour be in blis, certis þat is not for þis dede; for  
 fynees was a iust prest, for he stikide þe man & þe womman  
 for þer synne aȝenus god, & þus he vengide goddis wrong.  
 þis emperour dide many godis, but þit men dursten neuere  
 hidir-to charge þe chirche to holde his day, & trowe þat he  
 were seynt in heuene. & so men seyen of seynt siluester, Silvester may be a saint, but if so he repented of taking endowment.  
 þat þif god wole he is blissid, but þanne he hadde myche  
 sorowe aftir for þis lordchip þat he toke, as seynt petre  
 synnede ofte & bi oure feiþ he is nou seynt, but we han no  
 siche feiþ þat siluestre is þus in blis. for it is nede to  
 cristenmen to wite what þing is bileue, & to wite what is  
 byneþe bileue, & putte not oure trouþe in siche þing. but it  
 is lich to many men þat siluestre synnede in his hiȝng,  
 & petre ne poule ne oþere apostle wolde neuere haue takun  
 þis staat; but þe fruyt of his sorowe & oþere gode dedis þat  
 he dide, wiþ þe grace of goddis wille, myȝten haue maad hym  
 seynt aftir. & þus men shewen bi opyn akyle defaute of  
 anticristis resoun. many þingis ben gode & holsum echone Things may be good separate and yet bad mixed; as priesthood and lordship.  
 in his kynde, & þe mynging of þes þingis is vnholsum to man  
 to take; so presthod & worldly lordchip ben boþe gode in þer

kynde, & þe mynging of þes two were venemous, ȝe in þe pope. for þis lordchip \*wolde quenche þe pouert þat crist haþ bedun. & a coorde is a good þing, & faste knyitting þer-wiþ is good boþe to man & to beeste in plasis where it wolde do good; but knytte þis coorde to mannis þrote & it myȝte soone strangle þis man. so hynde þou lordchip of þis world to seculer men þat han wit & vertu to worche aftir þis lordchip, aftir þe lawe þat crist haþ ȝouyn, & it may do myche good, goddis worchip & his chirchis profit; but knytte þis lordchip to cristis prest & it wole lette hym to speke þe lawe of god & soulis heelp, & strangle hym & many oþere. þus alle þe resouns þat þe fend can make aȝenus crist & cristis prestis may be auoydid bi oure feiþ, & make heretikis to shame of hem.

### Capitulum 10<sup>m</sup>.

Antichrist argues; that abbeyes and colleges would be destroyed if perpetual alms ceased.

it argueþ anticrist þat bi þis fel foly perpetual almes in abbeyes & in collegies shulde be destried: but where were more synne? & siþ it is greet meede to do almes for a tyme, it were myche more meede to contynue perpetual almes; & þus charteres of lordis & kyngis of þer perpetual almes shulden be destried, & goostly help þat sueþ þer-of, & no drede þe pope is ground of alle sicke perpetual almes. Heere han trewe men ofte seyð þat it were myche betere þat men lyueden opyn lif þan in sicke nestis of þe fend; for sicke abbeyes & collegies ben hordis of synne to herbore hym.

It would be better if there were no such nests of the devil.

Matt. vi. [25.] & herfore seiþ crist in þe gospel þat men shulden not be biis to þe morowe; but anticrist haþ hardy maner to holde his castel for many ȝeers. & þus þat crist durste not do, ne his apostlis aftir hym, anticrist dare blyndly do in holding of sicke castels, & þis is a fendis cautel þat he haþ brouȝt yn of newe. heritage of erþly lordis goiþ ofte tyme amys whanne tirauntis & goddis traytours comen eyris aftir gode men; but ȝit god ordeyneþ grace heere, & ordeyneþ summe to wante eyris, & bi many priuey weyes he takij yuel fro gode men

Heritage among secular lords falls sometimes into bad hands,

but whanne sicke hord of þe fend is perpetuald in o heed, be it good be it yuel, it lastiþ many mennus lyues, & it is comynly yuel. for crist hadde but twelue apostlis & ledde hem in trauel & pouert & hooly preching of his word, & þit scarioth was a shrewe for al þe vertu þat crist shewide. lord, wher popis & erþly lordis han more vertu þan crist hadde heere? & þus sicke nestis \*shulden not be callid perpetuel almes of worldly lordis, but dennes of þeues, & nestis of serpentis, & homely housis of quye deuels. & þey don harm to cristis chirge bi perpetualte in þer synne; & oþer ground han no men forto founde sicke dennes, but þat crist forfendide hem & shewide þer perel in scarioth. & se þe cautel of þe fend, hou quentely he haþ brouȝt þis yn. he moueþ þes founderis to pride, & seiþ þey ben comun of grete men, þat han foundid perpetuel abbeyes in so myche multitude. where is more satanas pride aȝenus mekenesse of iesu crist? for oure bileue techiþ vs þat a man doiþ no lengere merit þan þe while he lyueþ heere in erþe; hou shulde þis meede euere laste? þes founderis sufficiden not to founde þer oune soule in vertues; hou shulden þei þanne suffise to make so longe vertuous men? & þif þer come good of þis ground, pore deed men þat god loueþ betere han more meede of þis good þan han þes proude founderis. & se hou anticrist & þes lordis stryuen as fendis in þis poynt. anticrist seiþ þat al þis lordchip felde to hym bi tittle of crist, & so þes lordis ȝaueȝ aȝen godis þat þey hadden vnjustly holdun, & so þei han no more meede but maken aseep for formere synne; & þit þey dwellen ay in synne þe while þei holden ony lordchip fro þe chirche. & þus it is not perpetual almes, but perpetual part of makinge aseep. & certis summe wordis þat heere ben seyde ben soþe, & summe opyn blasfemye, siþen crist, þat is lord of alle, forfendide sicke nestis in þe gospel, & ordeynede to his moost dere children þat þey shulden not haue sicke dwellinge place. & þis he ordeynede for þis ende, þat men shulden coueyte þe place of heuene. & to þe foorme of anticristis skile: he & alle hise kunnen not grounde þat

but this lasts through the lives of many men and mostly bad ones.

Even among the apostles there was an Iscariot.

[p. 325 MS.]

Names that should be given to monasteries.

The devil stirs men by pride to make such foundations.

A man can do no merit after his death.

Antichrist says that all lordship falls to him by right, so that gifts are only partial restitution.

As to the form of Antichrist's reason.

his was euer ony almes to make þus siche cayms castels.   
 Solomons temple was a figure of the Church, but not a model for it.   
 sobely in þe olde lawe was salomons temple a figure of þe   
 chiroche in þe newe lawe, but not þat þe chirche shulde be   
 siche, but fre & large vnder þe cope of heuene, & stonde in   
 vertues of mannes soule; but anticrist wole close it nou in   
 coolde stones þat moten perisshe. & þus þis founding vn-   
 groundid was noon almes at þe bigynnyng, & it is not aftir   
 quykenyd to be almes wiþ-oute skile; but almes were to   
 sue crist & ordeyne mennus lif aftir his lawe. crist is   
 god þat chalengijþ propre to ordeyne siche \*perpetuytes, for   
 he is lord wiþ-outen ende; who dare take fro hym þis   
 lordchip? do men good for þer lif, & ȝyue þei to crist   
 perpetuyte, for he can & may do þis as hym likijþ in his   
 chiroche. & þus errour in siche synnes haþ destried many   
 kynredis & punysshid many soulis in helle, who so wyste þe   
 soþe bi crist. & þus siche charteres of seculer lordis & of   
 popis ben ofte witnessis of þe errours of þer eldris þat weren   
 grounderis of þes synnes.

\*[p. 33 MS.]

Perpetuity be-   
 longs to Christ.

### Capitulum 11<sup>m</sup>.

Anticrist says   
 that the whole   
 order of the   
 Church would   
 be destroyed.

but ȝit anticrist grucchiþ & seiþ þat þis is heresye, for it   
 techijþ a weye bi which hooly chirche shulde be destried.   
 for ȝif þer were no pope in erþe ne no cardenals his   
 felowis, þer were no patriarkis, ne archibischops, ne bischops,   
 ne erchedekenes, ne officials, ne persons, ne prestis. & ȝif   
 þes ordris perissiden þus, erþely lordis shulden sumnere   
 perische, & so þe chiroche shulde dwelle wiþ-outen ordre,   
 as fendis wanten ordre in helle & ben in horroure wiþ-outen   
 ende. Heere it haþ be seyð ofte bi witnesse of trewe men þat   
 þer mut nedis be an ordre of þre partis of þe chirche, þat ben   
 clerkis, lordis & comyns, & in ech of hem is ordre. for crist,   
 þat is boþe god & man & heed & ground of hooly chirche,   
 puttide þis ordre pleyndly & ȝaf lawis to contynue it, & a man   
 may no more shewe þat he is anticrist hym silf þas to reuorse

True men reply   
 there would still   
 be Christ's order   
 of the three parts   
 of Holy Church.



his ordre, & feyne a newe wiþ-oute ground. & siþ we taken of goddis lawe þat crist dwelliþ wiþ-outen ende, he were a fool out of bileue þat diffede heere of cristis help. crist wole ordeyne to his chirche prestis & ordre þat is nedeful, al ȝif þes foure sectis weren sunkun down to þer fadir. leue whanne þe pope was deed & cardenals weren not ȝit sprongun, in whois hond was þe chirche þat wandriþ heere vpon erþe? certis in cristis hond, þat dwelliþ euere heed of hooly chirche; & he mut nedis ordeyne prestis, summe hyere & summe lowers, aftir þat he ȝyueþ hem grace to profite more aftir his lawe. & þus ȝif þer weren no popis, ne cardenals, ne emperours prelati, hooly chirche shulde stonde wel bi þe ordre þat crist puttide. & ȝif þou axe who shulde make þes prestis, & bi what wordis & whois autorite, certis bileue nediþ vs to seye þat crist mut make þes prestis, oþer bi wordis hid to vs or bi grace wiþ-oute wordis, as crist not wiþ-outen cause made apostlis & telde vs not bi what wor<sup>d</sup>dis \*[p. 330 MS.] he made hem; why shulde not crist do ȝit so? trowe we þat crist sitting in heuene is lettid to strecche his grace so fer? siþ he is boþe god & man, & gouerniþ vs in oþere þingis. & ȝif þou seye þat on þis maner myȝte ech man feyne hym silf a staat, & seye þat he is hierste man þat dwelliþ in erþe vndir crist; soþ it is þat many pseudois may speke myche wiþ-oute ground, & þerfore crist haþ ȝouyn a lawe to trowe hem not but ȝif þey grounden hem. & siþ crist bad trowe to his werkis & ȝaf neþer bullis ne lettris selid, men shulden more trowe hooly werkis þan popis bullis or bishops lettris. for alle þese ben not gospel, but þe fende may regne vndir þes writtis; for boþe popis, bishopsis & prestis may be wiþ þes þe fendis children, & no partis of hooly chirche but fendis ordeyned to be dampnyd. trowe þou to vertuous dedis of prestis, & algatis to þer mekenesse, þat þey coueyten noon hye staat þat is not groundid in goddis lawe. & so proude prestis & coueytous ben suspect of prestis staat. but þis suspicioun is not bileue ne hope þat man shulde haue. but neþales ech man heere shulde lyue in hope þat bi his lif

Christ is always head of the Church, and he will provide priests.

It may be objected that each man might claim what portion he chose.

Christ has taught us only to believe such as rest in his laws.

We should judge priests by their good deeds.

It would be no harm if all pontificals were burnt.

These new orders distemper the order of Christ.

Popes and cardinals have no \* [p. 34 MS.] authority from Christ.

Priesthood consists in meekness and charity.

he shulde come to heuene, for mekenesse & opere vertues þat he haþ. & þus we shulden lyue in bileue in hope & in charite, & who so wantiþ hope heere he is an opyn anticrist. þus we hopen to be sauýd, al ȝif þes prelatis ben opyn fendis, & oure bileue & hope is picchid in þe grace of iesu crist, & oure gode werkis may we knowe wiþ entent in oure soule. many men trowen more to gode werkis þan to staat of pope or bischop, & so alle þes pontificals ben byneþe hooly writ, so þat ȝif þey alle weren brent cristendom shulde stonde wel. for ellis ȝif freris founden wordis to sacre þe armes of a prest, & þe pope ȝaue hym meede to fiȝte wiþ opere cristenmen, he were out of bileue þat trowede not to al þis. but fer be it fro cristenmen to trowe sicke cautels of þe fend; & bi þis may men se answer to þe foorme of anticristis resoun. þes wordis of þe emperours prelatis þat ben not groundid in goddis lawe destrien not hooly chirche, ne þe ordre þat crist haþ sett; but founding of þes newe ordris distemperiþ þe ordris of crist, & þus þe fend steliþ in mo men to his stede. þe ordre of kyngis & dukis & knyȝtis & of seruauntis to hem ben groundid \* in goddis lawe, but not of popis & cardenals. crist ordeynede bi his ordre þat his apostlis & his prestis shulden be felowis & meke men & telle not hye bi hem silf, & so crist makij distineccioun bi-twixe ordre of erþly lordis & ordre of his prestis. for þat ordre is hid to god & stondiþ in mekenesse & opere dedis of charite; & so blyndenesse of anticrist shulde not disproue þes worldly lordis, ne proue þat bi þe same skyle mut be þis ordre of emperours prelatis.

### Capitulum 12<sup>m</sup>.

Antichrist asks who is to give indulgences, if there were no pope.

it anticrist argueþ þat it is nedeful to þe chirche þat þe pope & his cardenals & opere prelatis reule it. for who shulde ellis assoyle men & graunte hem so large indulgencis boþe of peyne & of synne, haue þei neuere so longe synned. & opere priuylegies of þe pope may not be teld of

erply men. in þis mater han cristenmen seyð priuely as þey dursten, þat it were good men to be war lest anticrist disseyue hem. & god wite it, men wolden wiþ wille seye treuþe for worship of crist & for profit of his chirche & hope to gete blis in heuene. boþe cristenmen & anticrist grounden hem on iesu crist, but þey fallen in-to dyuerse weyes bi þe tempting of þe fend. anticrist leueþ mekenesse & paciense wiþ oþere vertues, but cristenmen holden þes vertues, summe more & summe lesse. & holde we þus cristis lawe wiþ-outen nouelries of anticrist, & seye we hou cristenmen shulden do in þys fendis blast. & þus men seyen bi cristis lore þat anticrist failiþ first whanne he seiþ þat it is nedeful þat þe pope & cardenals reule cristis chirche. for whanne cristis chirche prof, weren no siche pope & cardenals; & siþen þes prelati were comun yn regnede anticrist wiþ synne. & anentis asoyling, bileue techiþ cristenmen þat iesu crist mut nedis asoyle ȝif ony man shule be assoylid, & anticrist may not for shame denye opynly þis bileue; but he seiþ þat crist mut nedis assente wiþ hym in asoyling, & he groundiþ þis bi þe gospel, but it is shame to reherse it. soþ it is crist grauntide to petre þat what þing he asoylide on erþe shulde be asoylid in heuene, & so it is of bynding; but þis was lymtyd to petre & hise þat suyden þe \*steppis þat petre wente, & whanne þer soyling & þer bynding acordide wiþ god in heuene. but nou it is no bileue þat þes gon petris steppis, & suen crist þe streijt weye þat shulde lede herdis to heuene. & also it is no bileue þat what tyme þat þes prelati feynen hem to asoyle, þey acorden wiþ crist aboue; & so it is no bileue þat þei acorden euere wiþ crist. For as þey synnen in oþer þing, so þey synnen in þis poynt; for he þat discordiþ fro goddis wille in his lif & in his dede may listly discorde fro god in profecye of siche asoyling. men preyen gode cristenmen bi þe vertu of iesu crist þat þey dampne not þes wordis to listly wiþ-outen skyle, but reste in resoun & goddis lawe & holde al þat þese techen. for þis shulden alle cristenmen do & passe not þe boundis of þis; & þis shulden men telle opynly

Christian men have said privily that we should beware of Antichrist's deceits.

Antichrist fails: since the Church throve when there were no popes or cardinals.

As to absolution: Christ absolves all who should be absolved.

Christ gave power of loosing and binding to Peter;

\*[p. 34b MS.]

but these men do not follow in Peter's steps.

Men who depart from God's will in their life, may do so in their absolution.

to suffere deþ for loue of treuþe. & bi þis may men se what þei shulen trowe of indulgensis. it is no poynt of bileue þat þe pope euere more is graunting of þes indulgensis acordiþ wiþ goddis wille; as it is no bileue þat so longe shal þis world stonde, as þe pope grauntiþ indulgensis. but bileue techiþ cristenmen þat indulgensis shulen no lengers laste; & þus it is no bileue iif þe pope, for bidding of a kyng, grauntiþ so large indulgensis þat a man may in a masse tyme where euere he heriþ þis masse gete twenti þousynd þeer of pardoun, & þat wole passe alle þe tyme þat soulis shulen dwelle in purgatorye; & þus he shal not dwelle in peyne bi þe graunt of þis pope. manye sicke þingis ben writun þat ben nouȝt of bileue, & þarfore it is perelous to trowe hem as bileue. We bileuen on cristis lawe þat iif man synnede neuere so longe, & were neuere asoylid of pope ne of his prest vnder hym, iif he wolde forsake his synne & be contrit for formere synne & ende þis lif on þis maner, god wolde forȝyue hym his synne. We kunnen not telle hou longe þat god wolde punysse hym in purgatorye, & þis is more grace of god þan þe pope telliþ in his lawe, for he wole nedis constreyne men to be asoylid of hym or hise, but þis durste noon apostle do. & þus it is no bileue, as it is no bileue þat þis or þis is very pope. for mannes choys makiþ no prest, hou euere þis lawe be hyed. for enleuene apostlis to-gidere dursten not chese mathy apostle, & iit þe hooly goost was wiþ hem & coueytise was away. & þus seyen summe trewe men þat sicke grauntis of þe pope þat ben not groundid in goddis lawe ben prauylegies, & litil worþ, & siþ þey ben not bileue, axe ground of hem bfore þou bie hem.

The Pope may give absurd indulgences,

that would keep a soul quite out of purgatory.

It is dangerous to believe these things as of faith.

It is not a matter of faith that this or that man is pope.

Such grants are 'prauyleges'; ask the authority for them before buying.

Explicit tractatus de papa.

## APPENDIX.

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Extract from the Tract *De Servitute Civili et Dominio Seculari*, Cap. V. from MS. Ashburnham, lf. 87b et seq.

Restat videre naturaliter de dominio ac servitute que in clericis magis fetet. Secte autem he quatuor ex cautela diaboli majorem servitutem in seculares dominos introducunt, et specialiter in hoc quod ipsos vecordant ad dei ordinanciam defendendum. Ut incipiendo a papa, ipse lege Christi exigit quod in regaliis exteris citet et precipiat quod quecumque persone sub regum dominio, quamcunque deus eos incarcerat, compareant in tempore brevi quod limitat suis iudicibus responsuri. 1. Sic autem contingit romanum presbiterum insanire quod mittat in Angliam clericis quos contempnit ut respondeant infra tempus modicum suis cardinalibus iudicibus inimicis, et ut machinetur hanc stultam cautelam diaboli quod Romam veniant vel ubicunque papam esse contingit, sub pena crudelissima responsuri. Sic enim contingeret papam regnicolas quoscunque regum destruere et depauperare regna tam pecunia quam personis.

Pope cites persons before his judges

and bids them come to Rome or where else he may be.

2. Iterum cum non tantum rutilat sua sapiencia ut destruat in regnis latrunculos, videtur quod necessitare vendicat fideles ut per vias abruptissimas et periculosissimas tam corpori quam anime capiant iter suum. Christus autem non vendicat hujusmodi potestatem.

He does not make the ways safe for them.

3. Iterum contingit quod deus necessitat citatos illos ex infirmitatis vel debilitatis impotencia quod infra tempus datum et usque ad diem iudicii non poterunt per tantam distanciam laborare. Cum ergo Christus ipsis precipit quod non sic laborent ad illam distanciam et papa crudeliter mandat oppositum, patet quod in hoc ipse induit habitum antichristi, cum nemo posset esse Christo magis contrarius quam tam

God may disable men from appearing to the citation.

dominative mandando oppositum illius quod Christus tam realiter precipit in effectum.

The Pope may be  
in hell by the  
time fixed.

4. Iterum quod patet irrationabilitas hujus mandati evidet via multiplici; nam papa de valde possibili potest interim in inferno condemnari. Que igitur prudencia citare hominem dum nesciat quorsum sicut nescit de prefixo termino ubi erit, specialiter si sit vivus vel mortuus, vel a dignitate sua depositus et in carcere violente reclusus. Nec habet ista citacio fundacionem aliam nisi quod Christus accipiendo baptismum aquaticum venit humiliter ad baptistam, ut patet Jo. primo et Mat. 3<sup>o</sup>; ideo antichristo pertinet procedere per viam contrariam.<sup>1</sup>

Men may answer  
quite as well  
by letter.

6. Iterum citationes tales notata causa possunt faciliter in Anglia terminari, cum citati volunt humiliter detegere et mittendo scribere ad romanam curiam fidem suam.<sup>2</sup> Que ergo ratio citandi tales incarceratos domini pro hac causa. Certum quidem est ex fide quod apostolus non habuit potestatem a deo nisi ad edificacionem non destruccionem ecclesie vel persone. Et si diabolus hanc potestatem simulaverit, in ista ficta simulacione est faciliter convincibilis esse mendax. Ideo cum unus fidelis debet in illo casu quod precipitur obedire domino Jesu Christo, sanum consilium atque catholicum videtur hominem tenere se domi et humiliter petere suffragium domini Jesu Christi. In ipso enim clamamus abba, pater, qui est mirabilis episcopus animarum. Et martirizacio ista diaboli est longe crudelior atque callidior quam martirizacio facta per seculares in ecclesia primitiva. Immo libera nos domine ab isto periculoso tempore et venenosis sagittis emissis de pharetra antichristi. Eya, milites Christi, servate viriliter libertatem vobis datam a domino non solum quoad bona fortune vel corpora sed quoad animam et virtutes. Antichristus enim licet stolidus vendicat dominari omnibus istis tribus.

A Christian  
should ask help  
from the king,

7. Iterum vindicare debet catholicus ex titulo misericordie subsidium a sano concilio regis sui, nam tanquam certum supponitur quod papa non habet potestatem tantam super corpus hominis regis legii ut rex habet; quis ergo Achitophel proiberet quod rex mandet tali suo legio ne ad pape mandatum tali discrimini se convertat. Si autem papa plus et principalius dominatur super homine regis legio quam rex

<sup>1</sup> I leave out No. 5 as it has to do with the Pope's exacting oaths of obedience from prelates and others.

<sup>2</sup> Compare the beginning of the so-called letter to Pope Urban. "Gaudeo plane detegere cuicumque fidem meam quam teneo, et specialiter Romano pontifici."—F. Z. 341.

ipse, cum potest esse inimicus regis et regni, ut nuper contigit in effectum,<sup>1</sup> videtur quod papa habet potestatem in cunctos regis regnicolas in regem et regnum proprium rebel-  
lare; ideo certum videtur quod rex habet plus principalem potestatem super corpore hominis sui legii quam iste episcopus ratione ecclesie. Aliter enim Constantinus concessisset Silvestro ad destructionem sui imperii principalitatem domini super singulos suos legios; sed certum est quod nec istud potuit nec papa debuit acceptare tale dominium. Sicut ergo rex potest et debet servare in suo regno aurum vel locale, licet pro ipso papa mandaverit, sic et hominem suum legium, cum in casu sit regno tam necessarius ut hoc aurum; specialiter dum papa non habet aliquid contra hunc clericum nisi quod legem dei et jus regni pupplicat contra refugam antichristi. Nec graviter ferat catholicus quod fidelis sic postulat humanum subsidium propter illud Jer. 17° : *Maledictus qui confidit in homine et ponit carnem brachium suum*, quia debemus in deo confidere principaliter, credendo indefectibilitatem sue misericordie tanquam fidem; sed in homine suppositive et ministralliter possumus confidere citra fidem, cum confidendo principaliter in deo quod moveat suum organum ad in tali justicia pertinente magnatibus adjuvandum, possumus ad hoc per fideles evidencias homines inclinare. Et unum credimus; quod quicumque Achitophel consuluerit regem ad oppositum est proditor, a fide et utilitate exorbitans regis sui. Necesse tamen habemus percepta multitudine scolarum antichristi in dei adjutorium figere fidem nostram.

and would not so  
show distrust  
of God.

The tract, "De Citacionibus frivolis et aliis Versuciis Antichristi" (MS. Ashburnham, lf. 65), begins by setting out the question at issue.

Questio. Si papa vel ejus vicario citante virum legium regis ut compareat coram eo personaliter pro loco et tempore que ipse voluerit limitare, dum rex non licenciaverit, predictus vir legius teneatur sub pena gravis peccati coram papa vel ejus vicario in dictis loco et tempore comparere? Et videtur quod sic, quia aliter ipsum excommunicant, spoliant, incarcerant, vel occidunt, quod non facerent nisi gravis culpa hoc exigat, cum deus non potest punire hominem nisi culpa pene hujusmodi precedente. Ergo conclusio vera.

Is a man bound  
to appear to  
a citation?

Sed antequam arguitur ad partem contrariam argucia ista sophistication est solvenda. Constat quidem logicis quod ratio ista To say so is to

<sup>1</sup> This shows that the tract was written after the Great Schism.

imply that the  
Pope cannot err.

God may call the  
man in another  
direction.

non habet colorem nisi supposito hoc infideli porrismate, quod nec papa nec ejus vicarius errare poterit in hac parte. Posset enim esse quod talis sit antichristus et manifestus diabolus extollens se invidenter (?) supra omne quod dicitur deus; et tunc idem foret sic ipsi annuere et antichristo sive diabolo consentire. Posset enim talis prelatus agitari tanta insania quod, deo citante virum legium ad contrarium, ipse citet irrationabilissime contra deum. Cum enim citare sit mandare ad futuram obedienciam adimplendum, patet quod stat deum citare realiter virum hunc legium per penam corporis quam infligit ne sic exeat regnum regis. Et cum talis prelatus patenter citat ad contrarium, patet lucide ipsum esse facientem hoc scientifice contra Christum, et per consequens antichristum. Et cum Christus sit major dominus, quia verus deus et dominus dominorum, patet patule quam necesse sit hunc virum legium non tali citacioni talis diaboli consentire. Dicit enim apostolus prima Cor. 10°. *Fidelis est deus qui non permittet vos temptari supra id quod potestis; sed facit eas temptationes etiam proventum ut possitis sustinere.* Et sic videtur quod imminente tali temptatione diaboli fidelis vir legius debet in deo confidere et Christo non illi diabolo in isto facinore obedire; quia sepe deus procul videt quomodo talis prelatus presumens hanc Antichristi vesaniam erit, antequam tempus quod limitat venerit, adeo impeditus, quod non tunc erit oportunitas ad virum illum examinandum, cum dei citacio citacionem talem diabolicam sepe frustrat.

A man sins who  
obeys the Pope  
rather than  
Christ.

The Pope does  
not know the  
true faith as to  
the Host.

Ex istis colligitur quod quicumque fidelis in domino sic citatus consenserit sic vecorditer antichristo, dimittendo laborem inunctum sibi a domino, peccat graviter tanquam stolidus preelicens sibi ambiguum, pro quo tam corpore quam anima est dampnandus. Cum ergo tales prelati non possunt occidere animam persone quam sic citaverint in inferno, et evidens sit quod ex tali stulta obediencia tam corpus quam anima occidentur, stultum videtur, et vecore electio pro citacione tali frivola laborare. Si enim sintilla caritatis vigeret in isto prelato visitaret talem provinciam instar Christi, vel saltem instrueret ipsam epistolariter more Pauli. Sed sicut citat ad locum quem nescit et pro causa quam habitualiter exprimere erubescit, sic nescit fidem catholicam etiam de hostia consecrata<sup>1</sup> quam tractat cotidie, et erubescit pandere causam diabolicam pro qua citat.

<sup>1</sup> This shows that the tract was written after Wyclif had attacked the doctrine of Transubstantiation.



Unde quia diabolus et quodlibet ejus membrum redarguunt seipsum in peccatis que perpetrant, notant quidam leges quas papa approbat in hac parte. Nam in decretis, 18<sup>a</sup> distincione, sic scribitur: "Si episcopus metropolitanus ad comprouinciales episcopos epistolas direxerit in quibus eos aut ad ordinationem summi pontificis aut ad synodum invitet, postpositis omnibus excepta grava necessitate vel infirmitate corporis ac precepcione regia, ad constitutum diem adesse non differant." Ecce triplex excusacio excusat a citacione metropolitani, ut videtur si fuerit ex mandato summi pontificis, cum ipse sit quidam episcopus et per dei gratiam metropolitanus. Primum est gravis necessitas que videtur maxima in custodia Christi ovium, ne a lupis rapacibus lanientur. Secundum est infirmitas corporis propter quam deficit citato dispositio data a deo ad taliter laborandum. Et 3<sup>m</sup> est preceptio regia quando rex precepit, sicut debet, suo legio ne taliter extra suam provinciam superflue evagetur. Et omnes iste tres cause vel aliquis earum in qualibet citacione hujusmodi sunt reperte, et specialiter cum rex regum prohibeat taliter evagari. Ad eleccionem itaque summi pontificis qui est Christus indubie debent viatores singuli laborare, cum Christum debent viantes singuli, postpositis mandatis et citacionibus humanis, eligere, juxta illud deuteronomii *dominum elegisti hodie*. Et sic viantes eligunt deum et ipse ab eis eligitur quandocunque mandatum sive concilium suum efficitur et mandatum humanum postponitur, quod videtur debere fieri quandocunque citacio talis frivola contempnitur et voluntas domini adimpletur. Et sic dicit quidam debilis et claudus citatus ad hanc curiam quod prohibicio regia impedit ipsum ire quia rex regum necessitat et vult efficaciter quod non vadat. Dicit etiam quod domi oportet ipsum eligere summum pontificem Jesum Christum, quod est gravis necessitas, eo quod cum ejus omissione vel negligencia non potest romanus pontifex vel aliquis angelus dispensare.

Three good excuses from a citation—  
1. Duty to Christ's flock;

2. Bodily infirmity;

3. The King's command.

Answer of one who has been cited and who is lame and feeble.

In these last sentences it seems to me impossible to doubt that Wyclif is speaking of himself.



## NOTES.

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Page 2, line 1.—The comparison of the religious orders to the Pharisees was common with Wyclif. Thus in his tract on Matthew xxiii. he says: "Nec dubium quin fratres et alii religiosi novelli, divisi a vita communi secte Christiane tam in cerimonia quam in loco, sunt pharisei."—MS. Ashburnham, lf. 76.

The comparison had been made long before Wyclif's time, and is to be found in a sermon of William of St. Amour.—(Brown's Fasciculus Rerum Expetendarum, ii. 43.)

P. 2, l. 11.—*Of þe þridde spekeþ þe maister of stories.*

The reference is to the *Historia Scolastica* of Petrus Comestor. The book, which is an abridgment of the Bible history, was very popular in the Middle Ages. The account of the Essenes occurs in chap. xxxi. of the *Historia Evangelica*, p. 211 of the edition of Paris, 1513.

P. 2, l. 16.—*Jesu cursede hem ofte ȝee eiȝte tymes.*

In Matthew xxiii. "Woe unto you" is repeated eight times. Hence the title *Væ Octuplex* to an English exposition of that chapter printed in S. E. W. ii. 379. There is a Latin tract bearing the same title.—(Shirley, 43.)

P. 3, l. 16.—*Seiynge . . þat crist tauȝte not . . þe beste ordre.*

Ac si dedignarentur vel erubescerent sequi Christum patronam, sed unum alium mendacem et grandem peccatorem sibi statuunt, regulam Christi ordinis deserendo.—*Dialogus*, iv. 35, p. 371.

P. 4, l. 19.—*Lettris of fraternite.*

The convents were accustomed to grant to their benefactors letters entitling those named in them to a share in the benefits of all prayers

and merits of the convent or order. These letters are a frequent subject for satire. Thus Jacke Upland :

Why aske ye no letters of bretherheads  
of other mens praiers,  
as ye desire that other men  
should aske letters of you?—Wright, *Poet. Poems*, vol. ii. p. 21.

P. 5, l. 9.—*þe pursuyt is maad for prestes techyng men where þei schullen do here almes, &c.*

That is, the preachers had exhorted the people not to give alms to friars and monks, but to the sick and bedridden poor. This was a common subject with Wyclif and his followers, and was naturally not approved by the religious orders. Compare the next article.

P. 5, l. 25.—*Maken profession to most hey pouert.*

There seems here to be a reference to the rule of St. Francis, where we read: “*þis is þe heynesse of þe moste hey; pouert*” (p. 42). The friars professed a more rigid poverty than the monks, since the latter were bound only to personal poverty, whereas the friars were forbidden to possess anything either individually or collectively. This (theoretical) perfection of poverty was one of the great boasts of the order. “*Una [paupertas] est omnium Christianorum quæ excludit alienum et includit commune et proprium. Alia est monachorum et multorum religiosorum quæ excludit alienum et proprium sed includit et admittit commune, quia habent aliquid in communi licet nihil habeant in particulari. Tertia est fratrum Minorum, quæ excludit alienum, speciale et commune et includit solum simplicem usum facti.*”—Nicolaus Oranus (Oresme), *Tractatus in regulam Sancti Francisci* (Luxemburg, 1626).

P. 5, l. 27.—*Gaiest wast housis, &c.*

For the splendour of the friars' convents, see the description in Pierce the Ploughman's Crede, line 118, and still more line 156 et seq. In the latter passage, the author may well have had in view the very convent where the Council was held which condemned Wyclif's doctrines in 1382. The church of the Austin Friars in Broad Street is still used by the Dutch, and although much damaged some years ago by fire, and by the consequent restoration, it presents a fair specimen of a church built with a special view to preaching.

P. 6, l. 27.—*And slen wommen þat withstonden hem in þis synne.* The same charge is brought against the friars farther on (p. 12). Compare Chaucer :

“For ther as wont was to walken an elf,  
Ther walketh noon but the lymytour himself.

Wommen may now go sauffy up and down ;  
In every busch or under every tre  
There is none other incubus but he,  
And he as wel doon hem no dishonour.”

*Wife of Bath's Tale*, 17-25.

P. 6, last line.—*Lumpis of yonge men.*

So in Dialogus, cap. 28—"tales globos claustralium."—MS. Ashburnham, lf. 114.

P. 7, l. 5 from bottom.—*But ȝif he make a vow to a blynd pylgrymage.*

The 'greater satraps' had sufficient reason for reserving to themselves the right of dispensing with pilgrimage. The value of the right may be judged from Walsingham's account of the Cardinal of St. Praxedes, who came to England armed with powers usually reserved to the Pope: "Vota peregrinationis ad Apostolorum limina, ad Terram Sanctam, ad Sanctum Jacobum, non prius remisit quam tantam pecuniam recepisset quantam, juxta veram æstimationem, in eisdem peregrinationibus expendere debuissent."—Walsingham, ed. Riley, vol. i. p. 452.

P. 7, l. 3 from bottom.—*Satrap.*

A favourite name of Wyclif's for worldly prelates. So in the Dialogus: "Que ergo evidencia movet hos satrapas sic voluntati domini adversari?"—Cap. xiii. (MS. Ashburnham, 103b.)

P. 8, l. 7.—*Graunte hem þe blesses of heuene.*

The Pope was liberal of indulgences on behalf of Spencer's crusade in Flanders to a degree which seems to have shocked even the orthodox. Knighton tells us: "Habuit prædictus episcopus indulgentias mirabiles cum absolutione a pœna et a culpa pro dicta cruciata a papa Urbano VI. ei concessas, Cujus auctoritate tam mortuos quam vivos, ex quorum parte contributio sufficiens fiebat, per se et suos commissarios a pœna et culpa absolvebat. Dicebatur enim quod quidam de commissariis suis assererant quod ad eorum præceptum angeli de cœlo descenderent et animas in purgatoriis locis positas de pœnis eriperent et ad cœlos absque mora deducerent."—Twysden's Decem Scriptores, 2671. No wonder that Wyclif spoke strongly. In his Exposition of Matthew xxiv. he says: "Qui etiam unquam audivit majus prodigium quam quod talis refuga per catulos suos suscitaret hujusmodi cruciatam, quod quilibet laborans in suo subdolo negotio suum proximum occidendo erit a pena et culpa certitudinaliter absolutus. Et sic statim advolabit ad celum sine pena purgatorie, cum beatis ceteris collocatus."—Ashburnham, lf. 60. He goes on to lay the blame partly on the friars, without whom he says the Pope could not have accomplished such wickedness.

P. 8, last line.—*Experymetis, or wishe craft.*

This looks like a reference to Roger Bacon, but he was not the only student of physics among the friars; see Prof. Brewer's pref. to Monumenta Franciscana: "I repeat that the first sustained attempts at experimental philosophy commenced with the friars, and grew out of the actual necessities of their position."—p. xliii.

P. 9, l. 1.—*Veyn songis, &c.*

Compare with this the social accomplishments enumerated in Piers Plowman, B. xiii. 230:

"Ac for I can noither tabre ne trompe · ne telle none gastes,  
Farten ne fythelen · at festes, ne harpen,  
Iape ne iogly · ne gentilych pype,

Ne noyther sailly ne sante · ne synge with þe gyterne,  
I haue none gode gyftes · of þise grete lordes.

P. 9, l. 14.—*Confessioun and berynge.*

The inroad of strange confessors, among whom the friars were the chief, was a great trial to a good parish priest. The sinner found it easier and pleasanter to confess to a passing stranger than to one who knew all about him. There were other less worthy motives that kept up a jealousy on this point. Thus Jacke Upland :

“Why covet ye shrift and burying  
of other men’s parishens,  
And none other sacrament  
That falleth to Christian folke?  
Why busie ye not to heare  
to shrift of poore folke,  
as well as of rich.”

*Wright, Pol. Poems and Songs*, vol. ii. p. 22.

To which Daw Topias retorts :

“I trowe it be the parochie priest,  
Jacke, that thou meenest  
that nyl not hosel his parishens  
til the peny be paied,  
ne assollen hem of her synne  
withouten schrift silver.”—*Id.* p. 46.

Cf. note to p. 224. Burials of rich men were profitable, as, beside burial fees, there were always bequests for masses at the tomb.

P. 10, l. 18.—*þei seynen hem sotil of fisik.*

The study of medicine was a tradition among the friars. It had begun with their devoted ministrations to the lepers and the sick poor. “The practice of medicine is engrossed by the friars in the thirteenth century,” says Prof. Brewer (*Monumenta Franciscana*, p. xlv). With this passage compare point xxxviii. in the tract “How Religious Men,” etc. (p. 224).

P. 10, l. 6 from bottom.—*þan þes pharisees preson faste to here wyues.*

“For when the gode man is fro hame,  
And the frere comes to our dame,  
He spares nauther for synne ne shame  
That he ne dos his wille.”

*Political Poems (T. Wright)*, i. 264.

P. 11, l. 9.—*Privatis ordris.*

The plural form of the adjective here should be noticed. Cf. Mr. Skeat’s note to *Piers Plowman*, x. 343, p. 199.

P. 11, l. 20.—*As hildegar seiþ.*

St. Hildegard (b. 1098, d. 1179) was Abbess of St. Rupert, near Bingen. She was an ascetic and visionary, whose prophecies were frequently cited by the Lollards for their denunciation of abuses in the Church. She is mentioned in *Triologus*, iv. 26 (p. 338). Cf. *Pecock’s Repressor*, 483.

P. 12, l. 4.—*Pore freris serabitia.*

Sarabaitæ originally meant men who professed to be monks, but subjected themselves to no rule. "Tertium vero monachorum teterimum genus est sarabaitarum qui, nulla regula approbati . . . adhuc operibus servantes sæculo fidem, mentiri Deo per tonsuram nescuntur."—Rule of St. Benedict, cap. i. The term was afterwards applied to the Waldensian teachers, and in the text it seems to refer to the spiritual Franciscans or Fraticelli.

P. 12, l. 18.—*Perpetual almes of coffris.*

I suppose this means endowment (perpetual alms) by annuity payable in money, as distinguished from gifts of "unmeble" property. Such money would probably have a chest or "coffer" assigned to it, especially if the donor had limited it to some particular purpose. See Mr. Anstey's introduction to *Munimenta Academica*, p. xxxvii, etc.

P. 12, l. 2 from bottom.—*ʒif þei ben made wafreris.*

Wafer was the name commonly given to the bread for the Eucharist, but it meant also a sort of sweet cake, as does the Fr. *gaufre*, and the waferer was a hawker of these cakes. The waferers had a bad reputation, if we may believe Chaucer's Pardoner :

"yonge fruytsteris  
Singers with harpes, baudes, wafereres,  
Which that ben verray develes officeres," etc.

*Par. Tale*, 16.

Compare *Piers Plowman*, (B.) v. 641.

The text, however, does not imply that the religious actually turned cake-hawkers. It only says that they were as bad when they made presents of eatables in the hope of getting them returned with large profit. The sarcasm would have the more point if the monasteries were often noted for well-prepared delicacies, and it is possible that the pastry-cook's art may have been cultivated in the cloister then, as the liqueur-maker's is now at La Trappe and the Chartreuse.

P. 13, l. 10.—*ʒif þei gelen hem worldly offis.*

"Item, quod monstruosius est, religiosi et monachi, qui plus sunt officiales fisci quam Christi, in curiis principum et cathedris iudiciorum et cameris computorum et aliis actibus secularibus militantes contra statuta Canonum."—Peter d'Ailly, *De Emendatione Ecclesiæ* (Brown's *Fasc. Rer. Expet.* i. 411).

P. 13, l. 13.—*Anyneris.*

Annona, originally meaning yearly produce, and thence corn or provisions, came to have the sense of a rent in kind, and also of a daily allowance of food. The annonarius, the person charged to deal with the annona, might be collector, dispenser, or both together. If, as I suppose, *anyneris* is the same word, it may be represented by steward.

P. 14, last line.—*Crist preied most in þe nyȝt in hillis, &c.*

"Et sic de vita Christi legimus quod ipse elegit facere facta sua sub divo, cum in dupplici convivio sub divo populum suum pavit, sub divo

sepius predicavit, et sub divo pernoctando patrem suum pro ecclesia exoravit."—*Speculum Militantis Ecclesie*, cap. xxi. (MS. Ashburnham, lf. 109).

P. 15, l. 9.—*Cost of kechenes and zate housis.*

So in the Latin Sermons (Part II. Sermon 49), Wyclif, after remarking on the sumptuous living of the monks, complains of the great kitchens which the abbots build. Then he continues: "Et ad figurandum conquestus suos atque dominia super dominos seculares multe abathie constituunt sibi portas sumptuosas cum propugnaculis tanquam castra."—MS. T.C.C. f. 223. The great stone kitchen at Glastonbury was built in the 14th century, but I believe its exact date is disputed. The great gateways at Battle and Bury St. Edmunds are also of the 14th century. The latter "combines in a remarkable manner a richly ornate character with an ingenious system for defence; it is at the same time an ornamental structure and a strong fortress."—Turner's *Domestic Architecture* in England, vol. ii. p. 191.

P. 15, l. 24.—*Placeboos and dirige.*

*Placebo* was the name commonly given to Vespers in the Office for the Dead, from the first word of the Antiphon (with which the service opens): *Placebo Domino in regione vivorum*.—*Sarum Breviary*, ed. Procter and Wordsworth, ii. 271.

*Dirige* similarly, as the first word of the Antiphon at Mattins in the same Office, gave its name to the Service.—*Id.* 273.

P. 19, l. 9 from bottom.—The signs of Antichrist and the fifteen tokens before Doomsday seem to have been popular subjects of discourse. The Apocalypse supplied the groundwork for them, but the popular fancy added much. Those who are curious in such matters may find the whole set forth in detail in the *Cursor Mundi*, lines 21971, et seq. (E.E.T.S. No. 66). There is a shorter version in Mr. Furnivall's "Adam Davy," etc. (E.E.T.S. No. 69). It is to be noticed that different versions do not agree exactly as to the order or even the nature of the different signs.

Wyclif speaks of them with contempt in his Latin Sermons: "Quomodocunque autem illi sompniunt de 15<sup>clm.</sup> signis ante diem iudicii, evangelium tamen dicit Mat. 24<sup>to</sup>: Sicut autem fuit in diebus Noe ita erit adventus filii hominis. . . . Melius autem est dicto evangelio credere quam ypocrisis codicibus sompniatis de deliramentis fantasticis hebreorum."—*Sermons*, Part II. Sermon 51 (MS. T.C.C. lf. 225a).

P. 21, l. 2 from bottom.—*Withouten synne, & alle degrees, &c.*

I think I ought to have changed "&" into "in" (and of course left out the comma before it).

P. 23, l. 16.—*Des rome renneris.*

Rome-runners seems to have been the regular name given to the persons who gained a livelihood by acting as agents at the Papal Court. There was a vast amount of private business continually in hand there, such as appeals in ecclesiastical causes, and the obtaining of dispensa-



tions. Cf. Sir John Paston's letter: "I have answer ageyn fro Roome that there is the welles of grace and salve sufficiant for suche a soore, and that I may be dyspencyd with: neverthelesse my proctore there axeth a mj docatys, as he demythe. But Master Lacy, another Rome renner heer," etc.—Paston Letters (Gairdner's edition), vol. iii. p. 101.

Wyclif had no doubt had painful experience of these men during his litigation about the Wardenship of Canterbury Hall.

In *Piers Plowman* (B. iv. 128) one of the conditions of Reason's Utopia is—

"And alle Rome-renneris for robberis of byjonde,  
Bere no silver over see."

Mr. Skeat (note, p. 82) understands the word only of the Roman procurators who came to collect money in England.

P. 24, l. 21.—*Here lordschipe & anemtis god, &c.*

I ought to have struck out the "&." The reference is to Wyclif's doctrine of dominion. If the man does not do his duty to his chief lord, God, his holding is forfeited, and he ceases to have any true lordship before God.

P. 27, l. 6.—Charges against poor priests of disturbing the realm were common, and sometimes not without foundation. The narrator of the *Fasciculi Zizaniorum* says: "*Vix aliquis eorum predicaret quin ad pugnam inter se audientes provocarentur et schismata in villis fierent*" (p. 272). In consequence, he says, the gentry required the Archbishop to put an end to these heresies, and this brought about the Council of 1382. Probably the troubles were due as much to vehement supporters of old things as to the preachers of new; but there can be no doubt that during the Conservative reaction which followed the rebellion of 1381 the reformers were viewed with a new suspicion.

P. 27, l. 3 from bottom.—*Ryghtful zeuyngs & of almes, &c.*

Probably the "&" here should be omitted.

P. 32, l. 26.—*ȝif a man be somonyd to-gidre to be heizere iuge, &c.*

"*Prelati citant homines longe melius in causa dei legitime occupatos, homines quos rex regum citat ad locum contrarium, immo quos deus impossibilitat ut sic compareant.*"—*De Sermone in Monte*, c. 6 (MS. T.C.C. f. 355a).

P. 33, l. 22.—*News religious assessours.*

The assessors in religious prosecutions seem to have been usually taken from the regulars. Probably among them were to be found the largest number of doctors of theology. In the first meeting of the Council of 1382, in which Wyclif's doctrines and his followers were condemned, sixteen doctors of theology consented to the decisions, and they were all friars. In later meetings five seculars appear, but of these, two (Rigge and Brightwell) had been judged at the first meeting and admitted to pardon.—*F.Z.* 286-291.

P. 35, l. 5.—*Ne for lecherie ȝif men wolen pais rente bi ȝere & dwelle stil þer-inne als longe as hym liste.*

So in Latin Sermons: "Licenciam per annum, vel tempus pecunie huic aptatum, ad mechandum libere quantumcunque voluerit."—Sermons, ii. 20 (MS. T.C.C. 201a).

It was a common cause of complaint that the Ordinaries did not attempt to repress incontinence, but made it a source of gain. "Purs is the ercedeknes helle," says Chaucer's Sompnour; and fines seem to have been generally accepted in place of amendment. In the Parliament of 1372 the Commons petitioned that if the Ordinary did not deprive beneficed clerks who kept concubines, the church should be vacant at the end of half a year, and the patron present anew. Moreover, that in case of the Ordinary being patron, the King should present in his stead.—Rot. Parl. iii. 314. In 1382 the citizens of London took the matter into their own hands, imprisoned some women "in prisona quæ vocatur Dolium," then cropped their hair close, and led them in derision through the streets. They are said to have been stirred up by Wyclif and his followers.—Walsingham, ed. Riley, ii. 65.

P. 35, l. 31.—*Whi schulde curatis pronounsen here breþeren a cursed.*

In one of his Latin Sermons Wyclif lays down that a priest must not excommunicate unjustly, even though his prelate bid him do so. He adds: "potest autem sacerdos inferior dicere parochianis quod talis prelatas dicit se excommunicare talem subditum; immo caveat sibi in consciencia sua quod de illo sibi imposito non sit reus, et detegat virtutem excommunicationis ne simplices de ipsa trepidant ubi non est racionabiliter trepidandum."—Sermons, Part ii. 43 (MS. T.C.C. 218d). Perhaps there is a touch of worldly wisdom here. In announcing the fact of the Bishop's excommunication the priest would have formally complied with the letter. The practical results would fall on the excommunicated person.

P. 36, l. 5 from bottom.—*To enprisonen þe bodi aftir fourti daies a cursyng.*

It was the duty of the Chancellor to imprison any one who had been for forty days under the major excommunication, and to hold him until he was released from ban.

P. 40, l. 5.—*Pope honoris.*—Honorius III., 1216-1227.

P. 40, l. 14.—*Mynystris prouyncials.*

The rulers of the Franciscan Order were called ministers (with a reference to Matt. xx. 25). The head of the Order was the *minister generalis*, and under him there was in each country a *minister prouincialis*, who had charge of the general interests of the Order. The use of the plural adjective 'provincials' will be noticed here. Compare p. 11, line 9, and note upon it.

P. 40, l. 34.—*Twis cotis, &c.*

The Latin runs: "duas tunicas sine caputio et cingulum et braccas et caparonem usque ad cingulum."

P. 41, l. 18.—*Breyaries, þat is smale sauteris or abreggid.*

This explanatory clause is not in the Latin. I need hardly remark that this is not the usual meaning of breviary. Compare the story about St. Francis and the novice who wanted a psalter (told in preface to Mon. Franciscana, p. xxx), where St. Francis objects, "When you have got a psalter, then you'll want a breviary," etc.

P. 41, l. 20.—*Vndren.*

Halliwell gives "undren, nine o'clock A.M." So, too, Mr. Earle, in his "Two of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicles," where the word occurs s.a. 538 and 540, and he is supported by Florence of Worcester, who translates in both cases 'hora tertia.'

In Stratmann's Dictionary undren is translated noon, and in our text it is given for the hour of sext, which rightly belongs to mid-day. There is a curious discrepancy in the use of the word in the Wyclifite Versions. In Mark xv. 25, we find "It was the thridde our, that men clepen undrun." But in v. 33, many copies of the same version have, "the sexte our or undurne." And in John iv. 6, we have again, "The our was as the sixte or undurn." Here two copies substitute for undurn "mydday." Forshall and Madden (Gloss. to W.V.) say "the time from nine to twelve in the morning."

P. 44, l. 5.—*þe lord haþ maad abregged word upon þe erþe.*

A quotation from Rom. ix. 28, where the Vulgate has: "quia verbum breuiatum faciet Dominus super terram."

P. 45, l. 15.—*Stable in general feiþ of cristene men.*

The Latin is: "Stabiles in fide Catholica."

P. 45, l. 22.—*The Testament of St. Francis.*

Another English version of this is printed by Prof. Brewer, from a MS. of the 15th century, in the Appendix to Monumenta Franciscana, p. 562.

P. 45, l. 24.—*Whanne I was in ouere myche synne.*

The Latin is: "Cum essem in peccatis, nimium mihi videbatur amarum."

P. 45, l. 4 from bottom.—*Litel pore prestis of þis world þat dwellen in parichis.*

This curious way of describing secular priests in charge of parishes runs thus in the Latin: "Et si haberem tantam sapientiam quantam Salomon habuit, et invenirem pauperulos sacerdotes hujus sæculi in parochiis in quibus morantur, nolo prædicare contra voluntatem ipsorum."

P. 45, last line.—*Fore in hem I take bi disorecion goddis sone.*

"Quia Filium Dei discerno in eis."

P. 46, l. 5.—*I wile abouen all þingis.*

Here the translation is again rather at fault. The Latin runs: "Et hæc sanctissima mysteria volo super omnia honorare et venerari et in locis pretiosis collocare. Et sanctissima nomina ejus (i.e. Christi) et verba scripta, ubicumque inuenero in locis illicitis, volo colligere," etc.

P. 46, l. 18.—*O cole or kirtil with-ynne forþe & with-out forþe.*

"Pieced" or "clouted" has been left out here. The Latin runs: "Eramus contenti tunica una intus et foris repeciata," etc.

P. 47, l. 10.—*þe Cardynal hostiense.*

The Cardinal of Ostia, afterwards Alexander IV. As Pope he was the great supporter of the Mendicants in their quarrel with the University of Paris.—Milman's Latin Christ. book xi. ch. 2.

P. 47, l. 18.—*& rede þei þes wordis.*

The translation here is hardly intelligible from excessive abridgment. The Latin is: "Et semper hoc scriptum habeant secum juxta regulam. Et in omnibus capitulis quæ faciunt, quando legunt Regulam legant et ista verba."

P. 48, l. 13.—*Men seyn þat he is cursed þat lettis þe riȝtful wille of a dede man.*

"Also all tho ben acursed that lette or procure to lette the testament, and the last wil of folk whan they deye, of thinges that ben ther owne, and that they may skilfully bequethe bothe by lawe of holy chirche and by custome."—*Monumenta Ritualia Ecclesiæ Anglicanæ*, by Rev. Wm. Maekell, vol. ii. p. 294. Compare the tract on the Great Sentence of Curse, S.E.W. iii. 304.

P. 48, l. 8 from bottom.—*In þe time þat sathanas was vnbounden, as the apocalips tellis.*

A literal understanding of Rev. xx. 7 led Wyclif and other mediæval writers to believe that from A.D. 1000 the Church had rapidly grown worse. (Compare p. 3.) Thus, in the *Dialogus* (lib. iv. c. 2) we find: "A tempore autem solutionis Sathanæ, dimissa fide scripturæ, multæ hæreses in ista materia, et specialiter inter fratres et discipulos eis similes volitarunt," p. 249. Woodford ingeniously turns this belief against Wyclif: "Sed miror valde unde adquisiuit in hoc johannes wicliff tale privilegium, quod omnes doctores de secundo millenario seducti sunt per Sathanam, illo solo excepto."—*Tractatus de peregrinationibus ad loca sancta* (MS. Brit. Mus. Harleian 635).

P. 49, l. 26.—*A scarioth.*

The Scarioth (Iscariot) was the man who bore the bag in which the offerings were put (cf. John xii. 5). He is described in the *Sompnoures Tale*, l. 46:

"A stourdy harlot ay went hem byhynde,  
That was her hostis man, and bar a sak,  
And what men þaf hem layd it on his bak."

P. 49, l. 28.—*þei wolen telle gold and money, &c.*

This absurd evasion of the Franciscan rule was commonly practised, and is gravely defended at considerable length by Bishop Pecock in his *Repressor*, Part v. chap. 14.

P. 50, l. 11.—*þe euyl children putten in-to here fadir þe pope, &c.*

"Que ergo caritas filiorum in patrem et patronum, effundere in tantum patrem venenum tam imperfectum quod inficeret filios si seruerent?"—*Purgatorium secte Christi* (MS. Ashburnham, lf. 52).

P. 56, l. 24.—*þes prelati mysusen þis betere seed.*

"Alii autem praelate Caesarii sunt nimis steriles et non spiritualiter prolifici. . . . Vitium autem Sodomium corporale est paruum in comparatione ad hoc peccatum."—*Trial*. lib. iii. c. 23, p. 209.

P. 57, l. 20.—The reference at the side should be to Luke ix. 49, instead of the corresponding text in Matthew. *Fonnyd* is evidently the translation of the Vulgate *insulsum*. In W. V. (both) it is translated “unsavory.”

P. 60, l. 2 from bottom.—*Fittrid squyeris*.

The only other instance of this word is in Myrc's Instructions for Parish Priests (E. E. T. S.), p. 35, l. 1146:

“Hast þou ben proude . . . .  
Of fytered cloþes as folis done.”

It probably means either slashed or cut into tags and streamers. So in p. 121, we have “proude slitterede squyerys,” and again, p. 148, “tatríd squeyeres and oþere meyne.” It cannot be supposed that raggid or tatríd means that the squires were shabbily dressed, as the ground of complaint is the magnificence of the prelate's revenue.

Halliwell gives as a Yorkshire phrase, “All in fitters, *i.e.* in very small pieces or fragments.”

P. 60, l. 2 from bottom.—*Swoerynge herte & bonys & nailis & oþere membris of crist*.

The wickedness of profane swearing was a great point with Wyclif and his followers, some of whom went so far as to declare all oaths unlawful. In one of Wyclif's Early Sermons, he says: “diabolus precepit . . . quod iures per vulnera et membra Christi, ut fias in reputatione hominum major ex verbis audacibus; et ad tantum in isto invaluit doctrina diaboli, quod major pars hominum putat non esse peccatum sic jurare.”—Sermon 14 (MS. Lambeth).

P. 61, l. 10.—*Pere þei myzttē vnneþe before haue bene-bred, &c.*

Compare the “Complaint of the Ploughman”:

“And commonly such been comen  
Of poore people . . . .  
Her fathers suffreth drought & weate,  
Many hungrie meales, thirst and cold.  
And all this these monkes han forsake,  
For Cristes love and Saint Benete;  
To pride and ease have take;  
This religion is evill besete.  
Had they been out of religion,  
They must have hanged at the plowe,  
Threshing and diking fro toun to toun,  
With sorrie meat, and not halfe ynowe.

Wright's *Political Poems*, i. 335.

Bean-bread was made for horses, and was usually called horse-bread. Making it was a special business, frequently if not always separate from that of the regular baker. See *Munimenta Acad.* (Anstey), p. 577. Cf. English Gilda, 366.

P. 61, last line.—*Mylneston of assis*.

“Mola asinaria,” Vulgate. Our translation loses this descriptive touch, which was not superfluous in a country where hand-mills were common.

P. 62, l. 18.—*Cotidian distribucion.*

"Distribucio quæ Canoniciis fit quotidie." Dufresne, who cites from an ordinance for the Church of St. John at Ghent: "Vice-curati de distributionibus, corpore prebendæ, aliisque prerogativis prænaratis non gaudebunt, sed illorum portio absentiarum cedit Quotidianæ, i.e. cum absentes fuerint nihil recipient eorum quæ præsentibus recepissent, sed id ad Quotidianam redibit; seu ad eam quæ quotidie fit Canoniciis distributionem." The charge in the text is then that the clergy came to prayers only to get their share of the allowances.

P. 65, l. 13.—*Lordes and ladies ben tratours.*

"Secundo autem erigunt seculares domini suam potestatem contra Christum in hoc quod curatos presbiteros contra suum sensum detinent in suo ministerio."—De Officio Pastoralis, ed. Lechler, p. 38.

P. 66, l. 22.—*Alle pes passen þre fifteenþes.*

A fifteenth, or, to speak more fully, a fifteenth and a tenth, was the usual standard by which subsidies were granted in Parliament. It was a tax on all movable property, of one-tenth in towns, and one-fifteenth in the country. Professor Stubbs estimates the yield of a fifteenth and tenth at about £60,000, including the tenth which was usually granted by Convocation at the same time as Parliament voted the fifteenth. The clerical tenth was reckoned at a third of the whole subsidy.—Stubbs' Constitutional History of England, ii. 549.

P. 66, l. 22.—*Alle goþ out of owre lond comunly into enemye hondis.*

"Non nostri sed inimici nostri cum thesauro per ipsum extracto de Anglia relevantur."—De Juramento Arnaldi, printed by Lechler, vol. ii. p. 576.

P. 68, l. 24.—*To geten zonge childre to here feyned ordre by symonye, &c.*

This charge of seducing children was very commonly made against the friars. In 1358 (?) the University of Oxford passed a statute to prevent the practice, in the preamble of which it is alleged that people fear to send their sons to the University lest they should be led to join the friars (Munimenta Academica, p. 204). An award of the King ordered this statute to be cancelled in 1366 (Parliament Rolls, ii. 290b). Richard Fitzralph, in his Defensorium Curatorum, accuses the friars of using their influence as confessors to get children (munusculis datis allecti) to join their order. He says that he knew of one child under thirteen who was thus allured.—Brown's Fasciculus, ii. 473. Compare also S. E. W. ii. 381.

P. 69, l. 7.—*Oile and crem.*

The crem is the chrism or consecrated oil, with which the child was anointed at baptism. The oil, distinguished here from the chrism, is that for extreme unction. Both were consecrated annually by the bishop.

P. 74, l. 6 from bottom.—*And in presence speke no word.*

From this it seems that it was not customary in the ecclesiastical courts to confront a man with his accusers. A petition of the Commons in 1414, complains that persons cited in the ecclesiastical courts could not obtain a libel of what was put upon them.—Rot. Parl. iv. 20.

P. 75, l. 24.—*þe body is neuere þe more trauelid.*

Contrast the dread in which the excommunication of St. Hugh of Lincoln was held. His biographer gives several instances where death or some other fearful punishment fell upon those whom Hugh excommunicated. See especially book iv. chap. 6 of the *Magna Vita*, which is headed "*De quodam forestario. De quodam etiam diacono. Et de quodam adolescentula. Et de quibusdam aliis, viri iusti maledictione in carnis interitum datis.*"—*Magna Vita S. Hugonis*, ed. J. F. Dimock, p. 178. A curious specimen of the stories told to increase the dread of excommunication will be found on our p. 153.

P. 77, l. 26.—*Deschaunt, countre note.*

Descant (or discant), discantus, a double song; originally the melody or counterpoint sung with a plain-song (*Grove's Dict. of Music*). Countre-note is, I suppose, simply counter-point. The descant had been introduced long before this; as early, I believe, as the twelfth century, but it had spread slowly, and during the fourteenth century there was a continual and rapid tendency towards increased elaboration in Church music. Descant gradually came to mean a variation (compare *Shakspeare's Two Gentlemen of Verona*, Act i. sc. ii. 94).

P. 78, l. 16.—*Comunly suche cursed prelati ben no part of holy chirche, in cas þat þei sullen be dampnyd.*

This refers to Wyclif's doctrine of the Church, which, properly speaking, he says, consists only of the elect. "*Patet ex fide Christi scripturæ et multiplici testimonio sanctorum, quod nullum est membrum sanctæ matris ecclesiæ nisi persona prædestinata.*"—*Supplementum Trialogi*, cap. 2, p. 415.

P. 80, l. 7 from bottom.—*Staciones of rome.*

Stations are churches or altars, to the visitation of which, under certain conditions, some spiritual privileges are attached. Naturally, there is no city in which such privileges are granted so lavishly as in Rome. Mr. Furnivall has printed (*E. E. T. S.*, Nos. 15 and 25) two versions of a poem enumerating the Stations of Rome, with the indulgences given at each.

P. 81, l. 22.—*Also ȝif þe day of doom come bi-fore, &c.*

"*Sic enim ex sibi dubio concedit has fictas vanas indulgencias pro multis milibus annorum ultra diem iudicii; sed valeant iste prelati hujusmodi in vacuo infinito, quia in mundo isto non prosunt Christi fidelibus sed multipliciter magis obsunt.*"—*Exposition of Matthew xxiv. chap. v.* (*MS. Ashburnham*, lf. 60).

P. 81, l. 5 from bottom.—*þe pope and his ben out of charite.*

"*Multis videtur, cum papa posset facilius, sine sua depauperacione vel facta injuria alicui, omnes subjectos suos a pena et culpa absolvere injungendo opus neutrum vel bonum de genere, quod omnino excidit de caritate si aliqui de suis subditis sint dampnati.*"—*Sermons*, Part iv. 7 (*MS. T.C.C. 297b*). "*Quilibet papa foret fatuus et careret caritate si aliquis secum contemporaneus sit damnatus; cuilibet enim tali posset facilius talia carismata impartiri. Quid igitur obesset nisi*

invidia quod cuilibet vianti, vel in purgatorio, non tribueret tale donum."—Sermons, Part iv. 21 (MS. T.C.C. 310c). Compare also Trial. iv. 32 (p. 358). It is to be noticed that our text is more moderate than any of these quotations. They imply that the pope claims power to save the wicked from damnation, whereas here he is only asked to save those who are in grace from the pains of purgatory. His power does not extend beyond this; but the vendors of indulgences did not always confine themselves within strictly theological limits when vaunting the article they had to dispose of.

P. 82, l. 16.—*Not for singuler preieres made of vs self for loue of an erpely kyng.*

As to this prayer see note to p. 482, l. 7.

P. 86, l. 13.—*Oure lord jesu crist . . paided him tribute for hym & his chirche.*

"Christus pro se et suo pusillo grege solvit tributum Caesari."—Trial, lib. iv. cap. 18, p. 309.

P. 87, l. 12.—*Prelatis resceyuen & axen gredely þat ilke money for whiche iust blood is spilt."*

When a prelate had capital jurisdiction, the escheats and fines consequent on the criminal's death fell to him (compare Pecoock's Repressor, p. 369). If, then, his power were stretched irregularly to putting heretics to death, he would seize their property. By the statute of 2 Henry IV., all lands belonging to convicted heretics were forfeit to the lord from whom they held, and their movable property fell to the king, so that the bishop would not profit unless the offender was his tenant.

P. 88, l. 6—10.—*Atteynen to kyngis aray . . cursed vengauce takynge?*

It is possible that here and in one or two other passages of this tract we have reference to the bloody repression of the Commons' rebellion. The Bishop of Norwich was one of the first to break it by armed force.

P. 88, l. 4 from bottom.—*þe to flee to heuene bi-fore þe bodi be cold.*

"Aliter enim non publicarent ut fidem catholicam quod quicumque laborat cum tali episcopo ad hunc finem, [i.e. the Flanders Crusade] vel iuvat ipsum nobiliter in expensis, erit absolutus a pena et culpa, et sic infallibiliter ad patriam advolabit."—Sermons, Part iv. 13 (MS. T.C.C. 302c).

P. 89, l. 21.—*Moldwarpis.*

"Quondam enim Christi vicarii qui erant ut columbe ad fenestras suas, et quasi aquile a terrestribus celitus evolantes, modo versi sunt in talpas circa terrestria fodientes."—Sermons, Part iv. 18 (MS. T.C.C. 307b). Compare p. 147.

P. 91, l. 39.—*Motetis.*

The word is probably derived from the It. *mottetto*, a jest, and was originally applied to a kind of profane music, which in the 13th century was censured by the Church. For the last 300 years it has been exclusively applied to pieces of Church music of moderate length, adapted to Latin words, and intended to be sung at High Mass, either



in place of, or immediately after, the Plain Chaunt Offertorium for the day. See Grove's Dict. of Music.

P. 92, l. 9.—*Davles*.

This word occurs again in the tract on Clerks Possessioners (p. 129), but I cannot find any other instance of its use. I have no doubt that the meaning is without judgment, i.e. without redress. The 'day' appointed for settling quarrels came to mean the Court (cf. German 'Tag' in Land-Tag; French 'jour' as in Grands Jours; and our own 'Diet'), and so the judgment. Thus in the W. V. (both) we find "that I be demyd of þou or of mannis day" (1 Cor. iv. 3), and in our A. V. we have still daysman=umpire in Job ix. 33.

P. 97, l. 26.—*Pencions*.

A pension was a yearly payment charged upon a benefice in behalf of some religious house which the patron wished to benefit. This left the appointment to the cure still in the patron's hands; whereas in case of appropriation the religious house was rector and put in a vicar to do the work.

P. 98, chap. 32.—Here is an instance of the tone in which a bishop treated the terrible offence of park-breaking. It is more than two centuries before Wyclif's time, but his contemporaries doubtless did their best to prove that the practice of the Church was uniform, at least in this point. "Hæc prædixi, necesse habens apud vos clamorem facere de quibusdam malis hominibus qui præterita hebdomada parcum meum frugerunt apud Humeres Feld, et unum quem ibi habebam cervum nocte interfecerunt, et projecto capite cum pedibus et intestinis, damnabili furto asportarunt. . . . Ego interim excommunico eos qui parcum meum frugerunt et cervum meum interfecerunt eo anathemate quo Deus iratus percutit animas impiorum. Interdico eis ingressum ecclesiæ, et corpus et sanguinem Christi, et communionem totius Christianitatis. Maledicti et excommunicati sint in domibus, in viis et in agris, in silvis et in aquis, et in omnibus locis quibus inventi fuerint. Computrescat caro eorum qui carnem cervi mei devorarunt, sicut computruit caro Herodis, qui pro Christo fudit sanguinem innocentem, cum Juda traditore et Anania et Saphyra et Dathan et Abiron. Habeant anathema maranatha, nisi cito resipuerint et fecerint mihi satisfactionem. Fiat, fiat, fiat."—Epistolæ Herberti Losingæ, ed. R. Anstruther, p. 70. It is only fair to let the bishop explain his motives: "Hanc excommunicationem, dilectissimi fratres, facio, non quia mihi sit multum de uno cervo, sed quia volo eos penitere et ad confessionem venire et deinceps corrigi a tali furto" (Ibid.). It would be wrong to doubt the sincerity of a man who showed the high value he set upon episcopal correction by paying an enormous sum for the privilege of exercising it. Many bishops in Wyclif's time gave the same proof of earnestness.

P. 99, l. 16.—*Viserid deuelis*.

This expression is used in the tract De Blasphemia (S.E.W. iii. 421): "þese freris wot not . . . . wheþer þei ben now viserde devels,

as Schariot was." The reprobate, who will be damned, are devils, but they are masked, since they cannot be distinguished on earth. One of the articles condemned as Wyclif's at the Council of Constance is: "Larvati diaboli, id est religiosi, ex nova simulata religione domesticati, non possunt in filios lucis cum necessario sunt filii diaboli."—Brown's Fasciculus Rer. Exp. i. 278.

P. 99, l. 17.—*Pleien the pagyn of scottis.*

I cannot fix the occasion on which the Scots played this trick, but it may well have happened more than once. We may note that Wyclif, as a native of Teesdale or the neighbourhood, was likely to have heard many stories of border warfare. Perhaps this may account for the somewhat contemptuous way in which he speaks of the Scots and Scotland. See a curious passage in the Trialogus, iii. 3 (p. 139).

P. 100, l. 6.—*Half dede men.*

I suppose this means priests, who should be dead to the world, but have in fact only half renounced it, and are revived to it (comforted) by these wicked prelates.

P. 100, l. 18.—*Forsaken as venym matrimonye, þat is leffel bi holi writt.*

Compare De Officio Pastoralis, p. 46, "Quomodo ergo versi sunt clerici ab altilibus celi in colubres, et discipuli Christi in phariseos colantes culicem et deglucientes camelum? Nam coniugium secundum legem Christi eis licitum odiunt ut venenum," etc. Compare, too, S.E.W. i. pp. 59 and 364 and iii. 190.

P. 102, l. 17.—*Scala celi.*

The Church of St. Maria Scala Cæli is one of three standing some miles from Rome on the Ostian road, near the spot where St. Paul is supposed to have been beheaded. It derives its name from a vision of St. Bernard, who saw some souls for which he was saying mass ascending by a ladder to heaven. The altar where he had this vision is still shown. As to its wealth of indulgences, we read in the Statyons of Rome:

"In þat place a chapelle ys,  
Scala cely called hit ys,  
'Laddere of heuen' men clepeþ hit  
In honour of our lady, be my witte.

Whoso syngeþ masse in þat chappelle  
For any frend, he loseþ hym fro helle.  
He may hym brynge þorow purgatory y-wys  
Into þe blys of paradys.  
Ther sowles abyde tyll domis day  
In myche Joye, as y þou say.  
And iij M<sup>ll</sup> þer ar graunted more  
Of holy popes þat haue ben þore:  
And syx popes graunted þat þanne  
That lyen at seynt sebastyan,  
Pope vrbán, siluester, & benet,  
Lyon, Clement, conformed hyt."

*Political, &c., Poems*, ed. F. J. Furnivall,  
E.E.T.S. No. 15, p. 118.

P. 102, l. 26.—*A prest may be so cursed and in heresis þat he makip not þe sacrament.*

On this point see note to p. 287, l. 12.

P. 103, l. 10.—*Oppressynge þore curatis, &c.*

In the Rolls Office there are many bundles of petitions from bishops and abbots praying the Chancellor to imprison persons who had been under excommunication for forty days. As a rule, the offence is not mentioned, but it is sometimes specified; and one that occurs often is non-payment of the subsidy voted in Convocation. In one case (in 1381), where a schedule of names is given, the amount due from each defaulter is said to be 16 den[arii] de Marcha. The taxes that year were unusually heavy.—See Stubbs' Const. Hist. ii. 449.

P. 103, l. 13.—*Annueloris.*

Annuelers, or annual priests, were those who earned their living by saying annual masses for the dead. In a church where but few masses were required, the parson said them and took the fees, but a priest was often appointed specially for this purpose. Sometimes the engagement was temporary. Daw Topias speaks of

“al these annuelers  
that syngen for a tyme,  
taking for her treveil  
as thei may acorde.”

Wright, *Pol. Poems*, ii. 95.

Often the payment was by yearly stipend, and we find in 1362 a complaint of the Commons that the pestilence has caused such a scarcity of priests that they ask extravagant wages. Their pay was then limited to 5 marks a year.—Rot. Parl. ii. 271a; compare iii. 501b.

As these clergy were not represented in Convocation, they had not borne their share of the tenths voted by that body, but their increasing number rendered them a tempting subject for taxation, which appears to have been levied, in the form of a poll-tax of 6s. 8d. on every priest, for the first time in 1380.—Wals. i. 449. A tax thus newly levied might well give rise to such discontent as is expressed in the text, but we cannot place too much reliance on this as an evidence of date, since 20 years later the tax was still spoken of as a recent grievance:

“and thus prelates and persons  
aftir her state,  
ben stended to paien  
what that nede askith;  
but neither freres ne annuelers  
save now late.”

*Reply of Friar Daw Topias* (Wright, *Pol. Poems*, ii. 80).

See Stubbs' Const. Hist. iii. 47 and 367.

P. 104, l. 2.—*Also prelatiþ ben dounbe houndiþ þat may not berke ;  
for þei ben so chokid wiþ talow of worldly goodis.*

So in Sermons, “þe fend hap stranglid þes houndis with talwe, þat þei mai not berke.”—S.E.W. i. 247. Cf. S.E.W. iii. 133 and 440.

P. 116, l. 1.—*Clerkis possessioneris.*

That is, such orders among the clergy as held endowments; monks, canons, and secular chapters. The members of secular chapters could, of course, hold property individually as well as collectively. The monastic vow bound to personal poverty, but allowed property to be held by the convents, which were often very rich.

P. 116, l. 15.—*The evils of appropriation.*

"Constat quidem quod appropriata ecclesia oblationes et decime stricte ad nidum abbacie colliguntur. Et cum necesse sit curatum de istis vivere, patet quod necesse sit propter istam subtraccionem officium pastoris deficere. Unde vel preficitur vicarius nimis inhabilis ad regendum seipsum conformiter legi dei, et per consequens nimis idioticus ad ducendum hunc populum per artam viam que ducit ad celum, vel preficitur unus antichristi vicarius qui secundum cautelas traditionis humane scit et optat de temporalibus suum populum spoliare."—*De Nova Prevaricancia Mandatorum* (MS. Ashburnham, lf. 93).

P. 116, l. 21.—*He may not go to scole.*

That is, to the University; but I do not think the "fyndynge of pore children to scole" (l. 27) need be taken in this sense.

P. 118, l. 10.—*Seynt bede wrot, etc.*

The passage referred to is in Bede's letter to Archbishop Egbert, and runs:—"Et quidem novimus quia, per incuriam regum precedentium donationesque stultissimas, factum est ut non facile locus vacans ubi sedes Episcopalis nova fieri debeat inveniri valeat."—Giles, i. 122 (printed also in Stubbs and Haddan's Councils, iii. 319). It hardly bears the meaning which Wyclif puts upon it. Bede was advocating the establishment of more bishops, and complains that the places where their sees should have been were already occupied by monasteries. He goes on to suggest that some of these monasteries should be made cathedral churches.

P. 118, l. 16.—*As þe holy martir possidonye writliþ of seynt austynes lif.*

"Sic enim narrat beatus possidonius de magistro suo bono augustino, quod rogavit cives iponenses reaccipere predia que sibi antea donaverunt, sic quod posset vivere pure de elemosynis, ut vixerunt Christus et sui apostoli, vel de decimis et oblationibus, ut vixerunt sacerdotes et levite veteris testamenti."—*Speculum Militantis Ecclesia* (MS. Ashburnham, lf. 120b).

P. 122, last line.—*The angel seyd ful sothe.*

"Unde narrat Chronicæ, quod in dotatione ecclesiæ vox angelica audita est in aere tunc temporis sic dicentis: 'hodie effusum est venenum in ecclesia sancta Dei.'"—Trial. lib. iv. c. 18, p. 309, compare pp. 374, 380 of this volume. It is to be noticed that in the Chronicles the voice is attributed to the Devil (Polychronicon, lib. iv. vol. v. p. 130, ed. Lumby). Bishop Pecock, in his Repressor, insists strongly on this point; for "if this be trewe, whi and wherto schulden we beleue his seying to be trewe; sithen he is oure enemy and oure bigiler" (p. 351).

P. 123, l. 10.—*In here profession þei ben holden dede.*  
Compare Jacke Upland :

“Why make you as dede men,  
when ye be professed,  
and yet ye be not dede,  
but more quicke beggars than you were before?”

Wright, *Poet. Poems*, ii. 20.

P. 123, l. 31.—*Of suche religious wrecchis seiþ Robert grosted, &c.*

“Cum secundum lyncolnensem claustralis propter ambitionem temporalium sic egressus sit sicut cadaver mortuum pannis funeralibus involutum, de sepulcro egressum, a diabolo inter homines agitatum.”—Early Sermons, No. 9, MS. Lambeth. The passage is also prefixed as a text (in Latin) to a short tract *Lincolniensis*, printed by Mr. Arnold, S.E.W. iii. 230.

P. 127, l. 18.—*þif a prest of her feyned ordre, &c.*

Among the petitions in the Rolls Office (see note to p. 103), is one of 1387, from Bankyn, prior of the Augustine friars, who “vestræ innotescat reverenciæ (i.e. to the Bishop of Ely, Chancellor) fratres nostros professos, Willelmum Pateshull, Thomam Beauchamp, Robertum Stokusle, et Johannem Sude, habitum et obedientiam sanctæ religionis temere reliquisse,” and goes on to say that without the King’s help he cannot bring them back into the Lord’s fold. It appears that Pateshull had bought himself a chaplaincy to the Pope, under shelter of which he ventured to bring charges of murder, torture, and nameless vices against the brethren of his order (*Chron. Angliæ*, p. 377). Bankyn was a member of the Council of 1382 (*Fas. Ziz.* p. 499). Another petition, dated February, 1382, is from the prior of Sempringham, against John de Whiteby, excommunicated for contumacy and flight. In this case, however, there is nothing to show any connexion with Wyclif or the Lollards.

P. 128, l. 25.—*Seynt Richard.*

“Seynt Richard of Armauz” occurs in the “Great Sentence of Curse” (S.E.W. iii. 281). It is hardly necessary to say that Fitzralph was never canonized; he did not belong to the right party. It was, however, reported that he deserved the honour of sainthood. “Circa ista tempora Deus declarans justitiam quam magister Fitez Raffe exercuit dum vixit in terria, ut impleretur de eo illud psalmistæ: ‘In memoria eterna erit justus,’ per merita ipsius Ricardi, ad tumbam ipsius, apud Dundalk in Hybernia, plura et magna cotidie operatur miracula; unde, ut dicitur, fratres se male contentos.”—Extract from a continuation of Higden’s *Polychronicon*, printed by Mr. Thompson as an Appendix to the *Chronicon Angliæ*, p. 400. So, too, in the *Chronicon* itself, “Quo in loco (Dundalk) innumera ad laudem Dei fiunt miracula” (p. 48). The passage referred to in the text is in the *Defensorium Curatorum*: “Item aliud damnum tam grave quod tendit ad consumptionem seu evacuationem doctrinæ in secularibus cujuslibet facultatis, est quod isti ordines mendicantium propter infinita lucra

quæ mediantibus prædictis privilegiis de sepulturis et confessionibus et aliis quæ acquirunt, tantum multiplicati sunt in conventibus et personis conventuum quod non reperitur in Studiis communibus de facultate Artium, sacræ Theologiæ et Juris Canonici, ut fertur a pluribus, de facultate Medicinæ aut de facultate Juris Civilis, nisi raro, aliquis utilis multum liber venalis, sed omnes emuntur a fratribus: ita ut in singulis conventibus sit una grandis ac nobilis libraria, ut singuli fratres habentes statum in Studiis, quales sunt modo innumeri, nobilem habent librariam; unde etiam de meis subjectis rectoribus tres aut quatuor misi ad Studium; et dictum est mihi quod quia nec Bibliam eis utilem nec libros alios Theologiæ venales eis congruos ibi poterant reperire, ad suam patriam sunt reversi, aut unus eorum saltem rediit jam. Si ista non sit in clero grandis jactura, nulla poterit in ipso esse, cum ad exitum talem, ut videtur, intendat quod clericus in Ecclesia nullus remaneat propter fratres."—Brown's Fasciculus, ii. 474.

P. 129, l. 14.—*A bayli, stiward . . . schullen haws festis . . . riches clopis and huge ziftis.*

Some examples may be culled from the Bursar's book of King's Hall, Cambridge (one of the foundations absorbed in Trinity College): "In uno exhennio misso Thomæ Crosse, vis. Item in alio exhennio misso Domino Ivoni de Clyntone, vis. id. . . . Item in alio cultello dato Domino Jervasio Baroni de Scalariis, iiii. vis. Item in cultellis datis famulis suis, iis. . . . Liberabantur menestralis in convivio Magistri Ricardi Goldingtone, iiii." And again from the Books of Commons of King's Hall: "pro uno jantaculo facto apud Infra Receptorem Scaccarii pro Cancellario, Thesaurario, Magistro Johanni de Offord, et aliis de Concilio Regis, tractantibus et consulentibus tunc ibidem super negotiis fundationis prædictæ."—Historical Manuscripts Commission, First Report, pp. 84, 85, 86.

P. 129, l. 27.—*To kepe hym self vnblekkid or defoulid fro þis world.*

There is a curious use of the negative here, the "un" in "unblekkid" being carried on to "defoulid." In both Wyclifite versions the text runs: "to kepe hym self vndefoulid fro this world."

P. 129, l. 4 from bottom.—*Caymes castel.*

The phrase Caym's castle is frequently used by Wyclif for a convent of friars. He explains its meaning in the Trialogus, iv. 33 (p. 362): "Alii autem fingunt . . . quod in Caym fuerunt istae sectae quattuor inchoatae. . . . Et in testimonium istorum, quattuor literae hujus nominis Caim inchoant hos quattuor ordines, secundum ordinem temporis, quo finguntur a fratribus incepisse, ita quod C. Carmelitas, A. Augustinenses, J. Jacobitas et M. Minores significat."

P. 130, l. 9.—The side-note to chap. 21 is defective. It refers to men who left their convent and profession in order to preach, and so incurred excommunication. See p. 127 and note.

P. 131, l. 9.—*þif a synful yaiot bidds hem do þe lesse goods, &c.*

"Et in ista bimembri blasfemia deserunt sectam Christi ex quo insani numero inferunt inconueniencia infinita; ut quod religiosum et

voluntatis Christi est quod talis religiosus subiciat se suo preposito faciendo quicquid mandaverit, licet fuerit stolidissimus ydiota; quia obediencia ut inquit est virtus maxime meritoria."—De Nova Prevaricancia Mandatorum (MS. Ashburnham, lf. 95).

P. 132, l. 5.—*þe, for foure penyworth good curse many þousand soules to helle.*

So Nicolas de Clamengis: "Sed hodiernis diebus adeo invaluerunt, ut passim pro levissimo quasi delicto, sæpe etiam pro nullo inferantur. Sicque in nullum timorem sed in extremum pervenerunt contemptum."—De Corrupto Ecclesiæ Statu (Brown's Fascic. ii. 558). The evil was of old standing. In the eleventh century Peter Damiani pleaded for a less liberal use of excommunication.—Letters to Nicholas II. (i. 7) and Alexander II. (i. 14). It is worth while, however, to note one marked contrast. Damiani's plea is: "Indignum quippe est, ut propter unius homuncionis offensam tam innumerabilis multitudo hominum depereat."—Opera, vol. i. col. 22. The souls perishing from the curse excite his pity. With Clamengis the complaint is, that too-frequent use of excommunication has destroyed its terrors.

P. 133, last line.—*Bryngenge in þonge children.*

This charge is more commonly made against the friars. See p. 68, and note on the passage.

P. 134, l. 10.—*Famulorum & benefactorum.*

There is a prayer near the beginning of the Canon of the Mass for the Commemoration of the living, and another at its close for the departed. Both begin with the words: "Memento, Domine, famulorum famularumque tuarum," on which follow the names of those who are specially commemorated on the occasion. Some such commemorations were granted, or at least promised (see Chaucer's Sompnoure's Tale) to all benefactors. The greater benefactors had frequently a day assigned to them in which mass was said on their behalf. There is a list of such observances for the University of Oxford in Munimenta Academica, pp. 370—373. Wyclif often speaks with dislike of this famulorum prayer, which, he says, is the most special, as the Paternoster is the most general, of all prayers.—S.E.W. iii. 441. So in the tract on Matt. xxiii.: "ingeminant multipliciter 'famuli tui' et 'famule tue,' ac si deus foret dormiens et non recolens merita viatorum."—MS. Ashburnham, lf. 77.

P. 136, l. 22.—*þei ben groundid on labor of hors hondis bi here owene reule.*

"Quia tunc vere monachi sunt, si labore manuum suarum vivunt."—Rule of St. Benedict, cap. 47.

P. 143, l. 1.—*þe office of ourates.*

It is, perhaps, hardly necessary to remark that the words "curate" and "vicar" have almost exchanged meanings since Wyclif's time. Curate then meant the beneficed parson in charge of the parish. If he absented himself, he put in a priest to do his work, who was called the vicar. A vicar was needed also where the benefice was appropriated

to a religious house, and gradually the appointment in such cases became a permanent one. In 1402 a statute was passed that in all appropriated churches "soit ordeine Vikair perpetuel, institut et induct canoniquement en ycelle, et covenablement endowez par la discretion de l'ordinaire."—Rot. Parl. iii. 500. In France the *curé* is still the incumbent, the *vicair* the curate.

P. 144, l. 17.—*And late alle pat helpe þe comunes in þis grete talliage.*

In the Parliament held at Salisbury in April, 1384, the Commons granted half a fifteenth to the king, with a second half-fifteenth if peace could not be made. "Protestantz outre que l'une Moitee ne l'autre, ne soit en nule manere levable, ne levee, sanz la condicion ensuante. C'est assavoir que l'Estat de Clergie emporte & grante selonc lour afferant a l'une Moitee & l'autre du dite Quinzisme, a les termes & jours suis ditz, si bien en salvacion de eux come des ditz Seignours & Communes."—Rot. Parl. iii. 168a. Evidently a strong feeling was abroad that the clergy ought to bear their share of the national burdens, and this gives a slight additional probability to the date I have assigned to the tract.

P. 145, l. 9.—*þe trewe clerk robert grosted writiþ to the pope, etc.*

The passage occurs in the sermon preached before the Pope at Lyons. "Unde pastores, personam Jesu Christi induti non annunciantes [Christi evangelium], etsi non superadderent malitias alias, sunt anti-christi et satanas transfiguratus in angelum lucis."—Brown's Fasc. ii. 251.

P. 145, l. 24.—*Fewe curatis han þe bible, &c.*

I may be fanciful in remarking that this passage would be characteristic in the mouth of Purvey, Wyclif's chief helper in translating the Bible.

P. 146, l. 8.—*And afterward drawn men to prison.*

Among the petitions for imprisonment of persons who had been forty days under excommunication (see notes to pp. 36, 103), I noted one from the Bishop of Ely (Jan. 16, 1380), against two men excommunicated at the instance of John, rector of Kyngston, "Occasione non solucionis decimarum silve cedue." It was very likely a case of disputed right, as tithes on woodland were due only on *silva cedua*, i.e. underwood of less than 20 years' growth, and this was a frequent cause of quarrel. In the Parliament Rolls there are several petitions for restraint of the clergy in this matter.

P. 149, l. 5.—*Fatte hors with gaye sadlis & bridelis.*

Wyclif refers often to the extravagance of the clergy in horses. The complaint occurs several times in this volume, and is to be found also in his Latin works: "Cogitemus ergo quod rex regum qui nunquam ante vel post fuit nisi pedestris tunc sine sella non equum bellicosum sed rudem asinam ascendit. Per hoc vero datur ecclesiasticis exemplum quod sumptuosos palefridos non ascendant, bona ecclesie non consumant cum sellis, strepis atque frenis deauratis vel antelis vel postelis de sericis."—Early Sermons, I. (MS. Lambeth 23).



P. 152, l. 22.—*Late hem enquere þe soþe, &c.*

"Quod fideles resistentes huic pugne sacerdotum (i.e. the Flanders Crusade) fuerunt tam per spirituale brachium excommunicati quam per seculares dominos tribulati."—Exposition of Matthew xxiv. chap. 2 (MS. Ashburnham, lf. 56).

P. 153, l. 3 from bottom.—*Pat a goode cristene man, &c.*

One of the grounds for prosecuting Wyclif was that he taught that excommunication was not binding except when deserved. In the list of conclusions condemned by the Pope in 1377, we find: No. 11. Maledictio vel excommunicatio non ligat simpliciter nisi quantum fertur in adversarium legis Christi. No. 15. Credere debemus quod [papa vel alius] solum tunc solvit vel ligat quando se conformat legi Christi.—Chron. Angliæ, ed. E. M. Thompson, p. 182.

P. 154, l. 12.—*Pere comeþ a pardonere wiþ stollen bullis & false relekis.*

Compare Chaucer's account of the pardoner—

"For in his male he hadde a pilwebeer,  
Which, that he saide, was our lady veyl:  
He seide he hadde a gobet of the seyl  
That seynt Petur hadde, when that he wente  
Uppon the see, til Jhesu Crist him hente.  
He hadde a cros of latoun ful of stones,  
And in a glas he hadde pigges bones."

*Prologue, 694—700.*

Generally speaking we may be inclined to make some allowance for colouring in the descriptions of satirist and reformer—of Chaucer and Wyclif. But in depicting the impudence of the pardoner there was no need—one may almost say no room for exaggeration. See Dr. Jusserand's Essay on Chaucer's Pardoner and the Pope's Pardoners, published by the Chaucer Society 1880.

P. 157, l. 23.—*For now heþene mennus lawis, &c.*

Cum nimis multi seculares hodie studeant in litium facultate, ipsa quoque Theologia in statu secularium paucos habeat sectatores propter abusum Romanæ curiæ, quæ Theologos contempsit, et in omni ecclesiastico gradu lucrativum scientiarum studiosos præposuit.—Pierre d'Ailly, de Reformatione Ecclesiæ. Brown's Fasc. i. 413. D'Ailly, Archbishop of Cambray, and a Cardinal, was a leader among the orthodox reformers, and took a prominent part in the Council of Constance.

P. 165, l. 27.—*Bete stretis op & down.*

This use of "bete" recurs twice in this tract. On p. 168, l. 10, we have "betynge of pauement," a phrase still in use in modern French (battre le pavé, aller et venir sans but, sans occupation.—*Littre*). On p. 172, l. 15, we have "beten marketis," which I suppose means to lounge about there merely for the pleasure of the crowd and society. Such loungers were generally in ill repute, as we may see by the secondary sense of swaggerer, attaching to "market betor" (see Reeve's Tale, l. 16). We may connect with this use of the word the policeman's "beat."

P. 167, l. 9.—*Not bi lonyngs & bedyngs.*

So in Pierce the Ploughman's Crede (line 716):

"And been at lone & at bode · as burgeses vsithe,"

which Mr. Skeat explains "to deal with lendings and biddings, to lend and bid." It must be noticed, however, that Halliwell says that 'lone' is still used in Devon as 'a supplication for alms,' and perhaps 'lonyngs and bedyngs' may mean merely 'begging and praying.'

P. 167, l. 26.—*Priests so vnkunnyngs þat men scornen hem in soynge of here scruyce, & redyngs of here pistil & gospel.*

Giraldus tells a story how Hugh of Lincoln entered a parish church to hear mass, and when mass was over, the parish priest "*statim cepit evangelia multiplicare, primo Initium sanoti evangelii, deinde Spiritus Domini, demum Salve sancto parens, et alia quedam nihil attinentia.* Episcopus autem his auditis facete subiecit: 'Quid eras dicturus est presbyter iste, qui hodie quod novit totum effudit?'"—*Gemma Ecclesiastica*, D. 1, xlviii.

P. 169, l. 8.—*Who lyueþ best preieþ best.*

"Opera autem justa plus orant pro homine quam mentis devocio et vocalis formacio labiorum."—*Lat. Sermons*, iv. 3 (M.S. T.C.C. 293a).

P. 169, l. 25.—*Magnyficat, sanctus, & agnus dei.*

The Magnificat was sung always at vespers. The Sanctus (Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus, Dominus Deus Sabaoth. Pleni sunt cœli et terra gloria tua: Osanna in excelsis. Benedictus, qui venit in nomine Domini: Osanna in excelsis) is sung in the preface to the Mass.

The Agnus Dei (Agnus Dei qui tollis peccata mundi; miserere nobis (*his*) Agnus Dei qui tollis peccata mundi da nobis pacem) is in the ordinary of the Mass.

P. 171, l. 14.—*And ofte ȝe raden it.*

The passage referred to forms the epistle for the Thursday in Passion or Holy Week, as well as for Corpus Christi Day.

P. 172, l. 15.—*Enter moten hem of louedaies, holdyngs wiþ fors of armes.*

A love-day was a day appointed for settling differences by arbitration or amicable arrangement. Doubtless it was often useful in avoiding quarrels and litigation, especially among equals, but its comparative informality made it the more dangerous in the hands of a powerful oppressor (compare pp. 234, 243, 245). We get a similar view of the custom in the Vision of Piers Plowman (B. x. 19):

"Who can contrere deceytes an conspire wronges,  
And lede forth a loundeday to latte with treuthe;  
He þat such craftes can to conseele is clepid."

P. 173, l. 19.—*Þei hiȝen faste to be prestis mo þan ben nodful for þe peple.*

"Evidens quidem est quod clerus per talem copiam temporalium peccat in quantitate et qualitate, contrarius voluntati domini iesu christi. In quantitate quidem quo ad numerum porcionalem aliis partibus ecclesie militantis. Evidens quidem est quod talis mun-

dana prosperitas facit clerum in numero superfluo appetere istum statum."—*Speculum Militantis Ecclesie*, cap. 29 (MS. Ashburnham, lf. 118b).

P. 177, chapter 24.—It should be remembered that, when these tracts were written, chantries had come to be the commonest form of religious foundation. One order after another had fallen away from the ideal aimed at in its foundation, till people had almost ceased to look upon monks and even friars as good men whom it was meritorious to help. In endowing chantry priests, they hoped to get prayers in return for their money, and the formal religion of the day looked upon this as the safest religious investment.

P. 177, l. 4 from bottom.—*Discencion & werres & pestilencis.*

We fear this allusion will not help us much with the date of the tract. According to Walsingham there were, besides the Black Death of 1348, plagues in 1361, 1375, and in the north of England in 1379.

P. 181, l. 12.—*Pei wolen answere for men at domes day.*

So the Minorite promises in Pierce the Ploughman's Crede (123-132):

"And myttestou amenden us wiþ money of þyn owne,  
 Pou chuldest cnelly before Christ in compas of gold  
 In þe wide windowe westwarde wel niȝe in the myddell,  
 And seynt Fraunces himself schall folden the in his cope  
 And presente the to the trynitie & prairie for thy sinnes.  
 . . . . .  
 pou; pou conne nouȝt þi Crede Kare þou no more.  
 I schal asoilen þe, syre, & setten it on my soule."

P. 181, l. 21.—*Jubilees þat we reden not of, of kyngis ne emperouris.*

A jubilee was celebrated when a monk or friar had completed the fiftieth year of his profession. The order for the ceremony is quoted from the Carmelite constitutions in Ducange, s.v. "Jubileus." The Jubileus was excused from many requirements of the rule.

P. 182, l. 22.—*Pei wole make many doseyns to forsweren hem.*

The "doseyns" are, of course jurors, whose corruption was one of the great difficulties in the way of securing even-handed justice. In 1364 it was enacted that any juror taking money for his verdict should be fined ten times the amount of the sum in question (Rot. Parl. ii. 288 a); but the severity of the punishment does not seem to have put an end to the offence. A petition of 1382 shows how juries could be used for extortion and oppression, and although much may be laid to the opportunities given by the troubles of the previous year, we cannot doubt that abuses were always frequent. Compare the Coke's Tale of Gamelyn, l. 785—

"For he was fast about, bothe day and other,  
 For to hyre the quest to hangen his brother."

It is only fair to the jurors to remember that they sometimes suffered from the spite of the party who thought himself aggrieved, and that it

was dangerous to give a verdict against a powerful suitor, although not many could, like Gamelyn, hang the unjust "sisours."

P. 183, l. 18.—*Forsoveren hem wittyngly for here dynar & a noble.*

The noble was half a mark, or six shillings and eightpence. As the shilling then contained 216 grs., it would be worth about fifteen shillings and sixpence of our present coinage. Weight for weight, its purchasing power was greater than now, but it is hard to fix a standard by which to reckon this. Mr. Seebohm, measuring it by the price of wheat, says four times, which would make the juryman's fee for perjury about £3, besides the dinner. See an article by Mr. Seebohm in the *Fortnightly Review*, February, 1870.

P. 184, l. 5.—*Abuses of Consistory (or Ecclesiastical) Courts.*

The ecclesiastical courts, which were very numerous, determined all causes matrimonial and testamentary. "There were other minor suits for wrongs for which the temporal courts afforded no remedy, such as slander in cases where the evil report did not cause material loss to the person slandered."—Stubbs' *Const. Hist.* iii. 345. They had besides to enforce the payment of tithes and church dues, and were charged with disciplinary power for punishment of adultery, fornication, perjury, and other vices which did not come under the common law. The reputation of the "summoner" is enough to show how abuses pervaded the action of these courts. Professor Stubbs has summed up the case concerning them in his *Const. Hist.* iii. 373.

P. 190, l. 6 from bottom.—*What is actif life & contemplatif.*

Wyclif would not allow that the life of the cloister had any special claim to be called contemplative. What was his idea of contemplative life may be seen in one of his English sermons, No. cxiv. (S.E.W. i. 382). He insisted that contemplation would not make a man more slothful in preaching. In a Latin tract on Matthew xxiv. he says: "Quidam pure viventes secundum legem domini Jesu Christi, qui in lecto contemplacionis per vices dormiunt et surgunt vivacius spirituale cibarium populo ministrando" (Ashburnham, lf. 63b). He goes on to say that those who fail to lead such a life, although they may be hermits or anchorites, will be damned. Yet in one tract, and that a late one, he uses "activi" in the sense of laymen.—*Purgatorium secte Christi* (MS. Ashburnham, 52b). I notice this as a warning not to lay too much stress on single expressions, especially when they belong to the current theology of his time.

P. 191, l. 21.—*Matynes of our lady.*

One of the seven hours of our Lady which, according to the local use, were said with the canonical hours; and often without them.

P. 192, l. 26.—*Sire tacks or hobbs.*

Sire is here the common title given to a priest, as occasionally in *Shakspeare*.

P. 193, last line, &c.—*Saying Matins more binding than celebration of Mass.*

It is a mortal sin to celebrate without having said Matins (i.e.

Nocturns and Lauds). A constitution of Archbishop Reynolds says: "Nullus Sacerdos parochialis præsumat Missam celebrare antequam Matutinale persolverit officium, et primum et tertiam de die.—Lynd-woode, lib. iii., tit. 23. The object of such rules was, no doubt, to insure that the celebrating priest should be duly prepared for his functions, but one result of them was, as noticed in the text, to make the saying of hours more binding than celebration, since to say the "hours" was binding on every priest.

P. 194, l. 6.—*Antifeners.*

Antiphonarium, a book containing the Antiphons or Anthems. "Nota quod tale Antiphonarium non solum continebit in se Antiphonas . . . sed etiam Invitoria, Hymnos, Responsoria, Versus, Collectas, Capitula et alia quæ pertinent ad decantationem Horarum Canonicarum."—Lynd-woode, lib. iii. tit. 27.

P. 194, l. 6.—*Graelis.*

"Stricte ponitur Gradale pro eo quod gradatim cantatur post epistolam; hic tamen ponitur pro libro integro in quo contineri debent Officium aspersionis aquæ benedictæ, Missarum inchoationes sive Officia; Kyrie cum versibus Gloria in Excelsis, Gradalia, Halleluja, et Tractus Sequentiæ, Symbolum cantandum in Missa Offertoria, Sanctus, Agnus, Communio, &c., quæ ad Chorum spectant in Missæ solennis decantatione."—*Ibid.*

P. 198, l. 2 from bottom.—*For alle angelis & men & wommen þat schullen be sauȳd ben goddis kyngdom & holy chirche.*

This tenet, that the true Church consists only of the predestinate, is often insisted on by Wyclif. It is found also in the parallel passage in the tract printed by Mr. Arnold: "Alle þylke þat schulleþ be in blysse after þe dome ryȳtwysliche may be cleped holy churche."—S.E.W. iii. 101.

P. 199, l. 16 — *Confermed.*

Probably a mistake of the scribe for "conformed," although "confermed" may be taken in the sense of firmly united.

P. 204, l. 14.—*Þis addynge to is trewe.*

Contrast on this point the tract printed by Mr. Arnold, S.E.W. iii. 112: "But for it is hard [to] men to grounden hem [leene to add þus], siþþe," &c. I quote thus far, as Mr. Arnold's text is defective; the words in brackets are supplied from the Dublin MS. C.C.

P. 205, l. 4 from bottom.—*For whanne wymmen ben turnyd, &c.*

"Sicut enim femina ad bonum dedita est specialiter ecclesie iuvativa, quia organum domini in maria et aliis sibi in virtute similibus; sic femina seducta cautelis diaboli superat in malicia multos viros, cum sit speciale rethe diaboli."—Sermons, Part II. 22 (T.C.C. 202b).

P. 206, l. 7.—*He þat kan best pleie a pagyn of þe deuy.*

I think this must refer to miracle-plays, in which the devil was usually the leading comic part. Grossetete, in a circular to his archdeacons, complains that the clergy sometimes take part in such plays: "Faciunt etiam, ut audivimus, clerici ludos quos vocant miracula," and he

desires that they may be put a stop to : "Miracula etiam et ludos supra nominatos et scotales, quod est in vestra potestate facili, omnino exterminetis."—Roberti Grossetete Epistolæ, ed. H. R. Luard, Letter cvii.

P. 206, l. 23.—*þe roten body, þat is wormes mete & a sak of drit.*

"Cogitaremus itaque quod femina quam sic tangimus est, nedum pro tempore suo horrendum cadaver putridum, sed in presenti, secundum regionem nutriciam intuita, saccus stercorum."—De Mandatis Divinis, cap. 29 (MS. Univ. Camb., Ll. 5, 13). The same idea recurs, S.E.W. iii. p. 125.

P. 207, l. 3 from bottom.—*Seynt steuene was ful of grace.*

Our A.V. has "full of faith," but the Vulgate "plenus gratia et fortitudine."

P. 208. l. 3.—*God þe trinyte is wiþ eche creature bi myȝt, wisdom & goodness to kepe it.*

Wyclif's doctrine on this point is explained in Trialogus, book ii. chap. xi. : "Certum est quod necessario Deus conservet locum quemlibet et quamlibet creaturam, et non conservat per potentiam ab eo distinctam [or distantem] : nec potest vicissim adesse et deesse sue fabricæ. Ideo necessario est ubique. . . . Deus necessario secundum totam suam essentiam perpetuo est ubique. . . . Ideo Deus habet unum modum excellentem et proprium, quo essentialiter est ubique. Et cum in Deo sit virtus atque potentia, quæ realiter est divina essentia, patet quod Deus virtualiter et potentialiter est ubique."—(Ed. Lechler, p. 113.) It is probably this doctrine which led to the charge against Wyclif of holding "quod Christus est vilissima creatura, cum sit ipsa materia prima."—Fasc. Ziz. p. 2.

P. 211, l. 7.—*Trentalis.*

A Trental is an office of 30 masses to be said on so many successive days for the dead. It also means the offering made on consideration of such masses. Special observances were usual on the 30th day from the death. In the *Academy* of October 18th, 1879, Mr. Peacock printed the will of Sir Thomas Cumberworth (A.D. 1450), which gives us a good example of the way in which money was distributed on such occasions : "I will the interment be made at my xxx day & the abbot of Thornewton do the masse derige & the exquies & have xxs & the vs iiij<sup>d</sup> that he owes me aforesaid & I wil the abbot of Neusom & the abbot of Welhow yf thay both come to my xxx day haf ather of tham xiis iiij<sup>d</sup> and ilke prior & prioris that comes to the xxx day hafe vis viij<sup>d</sup> and ilke chanon or none that comes to the said xxx day have xx<sup>d</sup> & ilke preast & frere that comes that day to deryge & masse hafe iiij<sup>d</sup>." Further, two priests are to sing at the altar where his wife and father and mother are buried, "& that ilken of tham haf C<sup>o</sup> to say the Trentall for hus in all the hast that may be getyn thereto." So universal was the custom of having a trental said for the dead, that we may notice in the Poor Men's Gild of Norwich an order, "þat any broþer or sister of þis gilde deye vii mile abouten þe Cite, or withinnen the cite, alle þe bretherin and sistrin shullen ben at þen enteryng

of þe dede corps, and offerin at his messe, and þeuen xxx<sup>d</sup> for xxx messes singin for þe soule, and for alle cristen soules."—English Gilds, E.E.T.S. No. 40, p. 41. In the Sarum Missal the *Missa pro defunctis* has a special prayer, secret, and post-communion for the 30th day.—Sarum Breviary, ed. Proctor and Wordsworth, ii. 529. It seems that sometimes the 30 masses were all said on one day. In the ordinance for the gild of St. Katherine, Aldersgate, the wardens are to summon the friars to say the dirge, "and on þe morwe to seie a trent of masses at same freres."—Id. p. 8.

P. 212, l. 5.—*Whanne riche men ben dede wiþ dirige, &c.*

"Why covet you not to burie  
poor folk among you  
sith that they been most holy  
as ye saine that ye ben for your povertie?  
Why will ye not be at her diriges  
as ye have been at rich mens,  
sith God praiseth hem more  
than he doth other men?"

Jacke Upland, *Wright's Political Poems*, ii. 22.

Our last note supplies a good answer to Jacke's questions.

P. 212, l. 10.—*Stryuen & fytten for þe dede careyne.*

Any one who wishes to see a lively description of such a struggle will do well to turn to Erasmus' colloquy, *Funus*.

P. 213, l. 6 from bottom.—*Liynge*, probably for *leiynge*—"laughing."

P. 213, l. 3 from bottom.—*pat longeþ to iurdiccion of prelati.*

Fornication and adultery were cognizable only by the ecclesiastical courts, and the bishops resented any lay attempts at repressing these vices. Such attempts seem to have been made occasionally. I have already (note to p. 35) mentioned one on the part of the London citizens, related with much indignation by Walsingham. About the same time, Aug. 3, 1382, I find a monition against the *ballivi* of Canterbury, who have presumed to try adulteries, etc., "*inquirentes cognoscentes et judicantes, penas bannicionis et alia deformia et noviter adinventia supplicia pro hujusmodi criminibus auctoritate sua propria imponent*" (Lambeth Registers). Banishment must have been a most objectionable punishment in the eyes of the ecclesiastical officials, since it dried up the sources of revenue.

P. 218, l. 14.—*Fleynge fro suche companys & abstynence & saad trauaile is best medecyne aȝens lecherie.*

"Et ad hoc valet ista medecina triplex precipue; circumspecta corporis maceracio, loci et persone cum qua peccaretur declinacio, et omnino totius virtutis cognitiue assidua et sancta occupacio."—De Mandatis Divinis, c. 29 (MS. Univ. Camb., Ll. 5. 13).

P. 220, l. 13.—*Sixtene condicions of charite.*

The notes of charity given by the Apostle in 1 Cor. xiii. 4, may be counted as sixteen, and are so enumerated in the tract on Faith, Hope, and Charity, p. 353.

P. 223, l. 6.—*þat þei approprien not parische chirchis.*

This is not the only place where Wyclif notices that appropriations prevent the material repair of the church, as well as the pastoral care of the parish: "Alii autem attendentes ad seculum horrent quod iste basilice appropriate tantum deficiunt in tectis et ceteris ornamentis. Sed infinitum gravior horror est quod populus ille, tanquam desertus a domino, deficit in spirituali pastore qui ipsum duceret ad beatitudinem secundum regulas legis Christi."—*De Nova Prevaricancia Mandatorum*, cap. 5 (MS. Ashburnham, lf. 93b).

P. 224, l. 10. *Siþ robert grosted clepiþ eiche exemption þe deuelis nettis.*

I have not been able to trace this expression, but in his sermon preached before the Pope, Grossetete denounces the evil of exemptions. "Sic ligantur pastores," he says, "quod lupis in gregem grassantibus nec ad modicum possint occurrere."—*Brown's Fascic.* ii. 255.

P. 224, l. 12.—*Siþ it is a grete sentence of þe chircho þat who ouers doþ aþenat þe riȝtful wille of a dede man is cursed.* See note to p. 48, line 13.

P. 224, l. 23.—*Mortuaries.*

These were fines or dues payable to the parson or vicar of the church where a man was buried. The religious in burying rich men naturally caused quarrels as to the payment of mortuaries. These dues were sometimes of considerable amount. Thus in one case we find the prior of Wenlock claiming one-third of all the deceased possessed at the time of his death, according to the custom of the diocese of Hereford.—*Rot. Parl.* ii. 38. In another case the chaplains of a free royal chapel complain that the Chapter of Lichfield have opened a chapel and cemetery, and taken away their mortuaries.—*Rot. Parl.* ii. 77.

P. 224, l. 8 from bottom.—*þe schame of grete synneris ȝif þei were schryue at here owene curatis.*

FitzRalph, in his *Defensorium Curatorum*, insists strongly on the evil of confessing to friars, and gives this among many reasons: "Quod in confessione ordinario facta, est erubescencia amplior quam cum confessio est fratri facta." Of the extent to which friars heard confessions, he says, "Ego enim in mea dioecesi (ut puto) habeo dua millia subditorum qui singulis annis propter sententias excommunicationis latas contra homicidas voluntarios, fures publicos, incendiarios et istis consimiles sunt excommunicationis sententiis involuti, de quibus vix veniunt ad me seu pœnitentiariorum meos quadraginta in anno; et recipiunt sacramenta omnes tales ut caeteri, & absoluntur vel absoluti dicuntur, nec per alios quam per fratres" (*Fasc. Rerum. Expet.* ii. 68). It is to a friar that Mede comes for confession in *Piers Plowman*, B. text, iii. 35.

P. 224, l. 2 from bottom.—*To homly wiþ gentil wymmen.*

Compare a passage in the tract *On the Leaven of Pharisees*, p. 10.

P. 227, line 5 from bottom.—*þe fend mousþ summe men, etc.*

This should be compared with the tract *De Sez Jugis*, printed in Dr. Lechler's Appendix, in which Wyclif insists strongly on the duty of obedience to masters, even when tyrannical.—*Lechler*, ii. 601.



P. 228, l. 15.—*Weilynge or languyschyngs.*

In our A.V. doting, but in Vulgate “*languens circa questiones.*”

P. 229, l. 9.—*Pore prestis . . . charge seruauntis to be suget þouȝ lordis bi tirauntis.*

“Homines sic tractati civiliter, quantumcunque in donis Dei gratuitis et gracia Christi resplendeant, debent humiliter injurias istas pati: et per passionem hujusmodi debent communiter plus mereri quam in aliis officiis nunc laudatis. Sic enim meruerunt Christi martires paciēdo et sic docet Petrus dominis, et discipulis, subici paciēdo.”—*De Servitute Civili et Dominio Seculari*, c. 3 (MS. Ashburnham, lf. 86).

P. 231, l. 25.—*Come and reproue him.*

“Seke ȝe doom, helpe ȝe hym that is oppressid, deme ȝe to the fadirles and modirles child, defende ȝe a widewe. And come ȝe and repreue ȝe me, saith the Lord.”—*Later Wyclifite Version*. “Et venite et arguite me.”—*Vulgate*.

P. 231, l. 27.—*Mercy and treweþe kept of kyngis.*

There is something wrong with the text here. The Vulgate has: *Misericordia et veritas custodiunt regem*; and the W.V. “Mercy and treuthe kepen the king.”

P. 233, last line.—*Paien not þerfore but white stickis.*

There was often a difficulty in getting tallies cashed. In the Parliament of 1376 Lord Nevill was impeached for buying up tallies of assignments made by the king to various persons. These he had got full payment for, while paying little or nothing to their owners. He was said to have made £300 in this way. Two persons are mentioned as having been thus defrauded—the Lady de Ravensholme, and Reynold Love, a merchant of London (Rot. Parl. iii. 328). When persons such as these rated tallies so low, it may be guessed what was their value to poor country people, whose goods had been taken by purveyors. Cf. God Spede the Plough (appended to Mr. Skeat's ed. of *Pierce the Ploughman's Crede*):

The Kyngis purviours also they come,  
To have whete and oty at the Kyngis node;  
And over that befe and Mutton,  
And butter and pulleyn, so god me spede!  
And to the kyngis courts we moste it lede,  
And our payment shal be a styk of a bough;  
And yet we most speke faire for drede—  
I praye to God, spede wele the plough.

P. 234, l. 10.—*But rapere wypholden pore men here hire.*

“In lege antiqua Levitici 19<sup>mo</sup> dicitur ‘Non morabitur opus mercenarii tui apud te usque mane.’ Quamvis autem istud exponatur communiter quod post completionem laboris opus mercenarii non debet remanere per tempus culpabile tenebrosum, tamen assistente indigentia mercenarii debet merces retribui in completionem laboris. . . Novit mundus quantum iniuste multi mercenarii sunt tractati nunc, labores indebitos ex diurnitate temporis, ex qualitate operis, et ex aliis circumstantiis exigendo.”—From tract *De Sex Jugis* (Lechler, ii. 598).

P. 234, l. 27.—*Lordis stryuen wiþ here tenauntis to brynge hom in þraldom.*

Among the petitions presented in the first Parliament of Richard II. is one complaining that the villeins and tenants get copies of Domesday book which they use to assert their freedom. Coming from the landlords, this petition declares this action to be wrongful, and attributes it to certain agitating counsellors, who misinterpret the document. Things had got so bad already (in 1377) that the peasantry helped each other to resist distraint.—Rolls of Parliament, iii. 21b.

P. 240, l. 22.—*Lay correction of clerks.*

"Moveri potest ulterius si secularis populus debet de prelato hujusmodi judicare, nam sic liceret ipsum deponere et decimas et oblationes suas subtrahere; sed tunc forent forus ecclesiasticus et seculare judicium commixta ad invicem et confusa, et contra istud militant multe leges. Sed hic videtur multis quod rex, cujus interest pacificare rempublicam, debet impedire adulteria, furta et alia crimina, sed specialiter in prelatiis, cum ipsa precipue perturbant rempublicam, et patet exemplum 3 Regum 2 de Salamone."—De Sermone Domini in Monte, chap. 32 (MS. T.C.C. 393c).

P. 241, l. 29.—*Paul's appeal to Caesar.*

"Quomodo igitur renueret papa vel prelatus aliquis judicari per judicem secularem, cum vas eleccionis, instar magistri sui Christi judicari sic eligentis, appetit se taliter judicari."—De Sermone Domini in Monte, c. 32 (MS. T.C.C. 393b).

P. 242, l. 4 from bottom.—*A market betere.*

The presence of priests at markets seems to have been a scandal. John Myrc, in his "Instructions to Parish Priests," says—

"Markets and feyres I the forbede  
But hyt be for the more nede."

E.E.T.S. No. 31, p. 2.

Market betere is usually explained as a swaggerer, but it seems here to be used only in the sense of a frequenter of markets. Compare beten marketis, p. 172.

P. 243, l. 21.—*Lords meyntenen . . extorsioneris, robberies, & reuers.*

The habit of keeping bands of violent and disorderly retainers, by liveries and other gifts, to maintain their patrons' quarrels, was common among the great people of the time. Statutes and petitions in Parliament were useless against it. In one petition the Commons say—"qar si les Meintences des Grantz soient tollez les faux felons & malveys serront puniz & les Leyes et la Pees meyntenuz" (Rot. Parl. ii. 165). The disorder did not diminish in the first part of the fifteenth century, as the Paston Letters show very clearly, and it was reserved for the strong hand of the Tudors to put down the abuse.

P. 246, l. 15.—*Or wis of billyngs of castelis.*

This has often been supposed to allude to William of Wykeham, but it is by no means certain that it has any personal reference.

P. 271, l. 6.—*þe briddes heresie þat may hoold of olde synnye.*

Mr. Hertridge suggests that for "may" we should read "many." I am rather inclined to take the reading of A.A., co recting "maþ" to "makij"—"*þat makij hoord of olde synnye.*" Cf. p. 476, l. 25—"Abbeys & collegies ben hordis of synne."

P. 277, l. 17.—*Fees for proving wills.*

Compare the petition of the Commons—"que y puisse estre declare en cest Parlement de certain combien les Curatours prendront pur proeve de chescun Testament et pur l'acquittance d'ycels, car ils preignent au present tres grantz fyns & extorcions pur ycelz, a grant damage du poeple" (Rot. Parl. i. Ric. 1. vol. iii. p. 25b).

P. 277, l. 22.—This proposal for lending freely to poor men sounds revolutionary; but, as no means are proposed for carrying it out, we may take it to be only the expression of a pious wish for the extirpation of a practice which every one thought sinful. In 1376 the Commons petitioned for more repressive laws against usury—"Come l'orrible vice de l'usure soit taunt espaundu & usee parmy la terre, que la vertu de charite, sanz quele nul puist estre sauve, est bien pres tote perdue" (Rot. Parl. ii. 350b). It may be worth while to quote Wyclif's words as to the wickedness of usury: "Usura autem videtur habere istam blasphemam maliciam quod usurarius vendit tempus, quod dare est deo proprium; et postposita spe misericordie et retribucionis divine propter hoc quod gracia bonitatis sue adjuvat fratrem suum, feneratur ista temporalia principaliter pro spe lucri; et quia iste sic postponit divinam ordinanciam, usura racionabiliter inter peccata maxima est damnata."—De Sermone Domini in Monte, cap. 58 (MS. T.C.C. 377b). Cf. S.E.W. iii. 154, where there is a long piece on usury in a tract which is almost certainly Wyclif's.

P. 278, at bottom.—*Amortisement by mean hands.*

One of the petitions in the first Parliament of Richard II. is directed against this practice. I quote it for comparison with the point in the text—"Pur ceo que les Religiouses purchacent terre, et fount autres de ceo estre enfeffez et les ditz Religiouses pernantz les profitz. Et auxi terre lour est done & autres persones enfeffez d'icelles et les ditz Religiouses de ce pernont les profites. Q'en celle cas & en touz autres que purront estre ymaginez, q'ils puissent estre ajugez en cas d'Estatutz de Religious' ent faitz, & que la Roi et autres Seigneurs eient l'avantage en celle cas come est ordeigne en le dit Estatut."—Rot. Parl. iii. 19a. It is to be noticed that the petition was presented also in the last Parliament of Edward III.

P. 279, l. 14.—*þe wast tresour hanged on stockis & stones.*

"Unde ad honorem foret sanctorum et utilitatem ecclesie, quod distributa forent pauperibus jocalia sepulcrorum quibus stulte ac eciam inaniter sunt ornata.—Sermons, part ii. No. 22 (MS. T.C.C.).

P. 285, l. 24.—*þei ben nedid to spoyle here tenauntis.*

"Magnates depauperant ac ipsos necessitant ad pauperes suos

tenentes et subditos insuetis tallagiis onerandum.”—*Purgatorium Secte Christi* (MS. Ashburnham, 50).

P. 286, l. 3.—*No man reuersiþ God.*

“Reversiþ” here is used (or miswritten) for “resisteth.” The Vulg. is *quis restitit ei et pacem habuit?* The reference should be to Job ix. 4.

P. 286, l. 14.—*þat makiþ a man seruaunt to nouȝt.*

This has reference to the doctrine which Wyclif had learned from Augustine (see Fasc. Ziz. liv), “that evil has no substantive existence, but is simply the absence of good, as darkness is the absence of light.” Thus, he says in the *Dialogus* (i. 9) that sin has no ‘idea,’—“sed homo cognoscendo creaturam peccabilem et quod peccat, sine ydea, hoc est per carentiam vacuitatis ydeae (ut dicit Lincolniensis) cognoscit peccatum” (p. 67). Again, “Sed cum peccati non sit ydea, nec peccati productiuitas vel producibilis est in Deo; oportet concedere peccatum esse et adesse vel potius abesse deficere” (p. 74). See Lechler, i. 509.

P. 287, l. 12.—*Unable to . . . ȝeue any sacramentis.*

Wyclif has been said to make the efficacy of the Sacrament depend on the worthiness of the priest, and this passage gives some colour to the charge. But if we compare it with other utterances on the same subject, we shall find that we must not take the words absolutely in this sense. In a tract ‘De precatationibus Sacris,’ after reciting the decrees forbidding attendance at the mass of an incontinent priest, he goes on—“Nowe siþ lecherie makiþ priests unable to . . . seie masse” (S.E.W. iii. 225). Here we have nearly the same expression as in the text, but the inability refers only to legal disqualification, not to the absence of Divine aid in consecration. In the same tract he lays down clearly the orthodox doctrine: “a cursed man doþ fully þe sacramentis þouȝt be to his dampnyng” (p. 227). In the same spirit he says of a priest who is not in grace, “nec sine falsitate dicit verba sacramentalia, licet prosint capacibus.” Wyclif’s real view seems to have been that since the efficacy of the Sacrament depended on the assistance of Christ, there was every reason to believe that the faithful would not be allowed to suffer for the unworthiness of the priest. Still the priest who was in mortal sin was no true priest, and had forfeited all claim to Christ’s aid, and therefore we could only suppose and hope in each case it was given, without asserting it as a matter of faith. “Et sic visa hostia adoro ipsam conditionaliter, et omnimode deadoro corpus Domini quod est sursum” (Trial. p. 281). Compare chap. 38 of the tract on Prelates (p. 102), Wyclif’s authorship of which is too uncertain to allow us safely to draw arguments from it as to his opinions. Dr. Lechler has stated the case for Wyclif’s orthodoxy very strongly, i. 608 *et seq.* (ii. 168 of the English translation).

P. 289, l. 25.—*Secular jurisdiction ouer clerks.*

Compare p. 240 and note.

P. 297, l. 1.—*Crist louede persones of hem, as weren poul and mychodeme.*

Cf. Of the Leaven of Pharisees, p. 2.

P. 298, l. 16.—*And as þei seyen freris weren þenne and longe bifore.*

Referring to the Carmelites, who pretended to a direct descent from Elijah.

P. 299, l. 27.—*þoure makid birþins.*

Burthens of your making. This curious use of the participle is not suggested by the Latin of the Vulgate, which runs—"ipsi uno digito vestro non tangitis sarcinas."

P. 301, l. 25.—*þe secte of Macamethe, etc.*

"Scimus quidem quod secta saracenica multis fidei nostre articulis autoritate legis dei consenciat, et multos ritus honestos atque laudabiles ultra has sectas observat; sed quia in necessariis secundum legem Christi deficiunt nec auctoritatem ab ipso accipiunt, ideo sunt infideles filii diaboli fugiendi. Quare igitur non iste secte que Christi ecclesie magis nocent."—*Purgatorium secte Christi* (MS. Ashburnham, 53b).

P. 310, l. 4.—*Jealousies between the different orders.*

"Cum sicut dicunt, ecce hic et ecce illuc est capud ecclesie, ita dicunt hujus generacionis filii, quod in ordine meo oportet hominem salutem consequi; alius autem quod non, sed ordine meo oportet viantem compendiosius et excellencius venire ad patriam; et in omnibus istis postponitur et contempnitur simplex religio Christiana."—*Sermons*, II. 48 (MS. T.C.C. 222c). For an amusing picture of these jealousies, see *Pierce the Ploughman's Crede*.

P. 310, l. 20.—*þer ben now many makid anticristis.*

"Et nunc Antichristi multi facti sunt."—Vulgate.

P. 310, l. 28.—*Ilche spirit þat lousiþ jhesu.*

"Omnis spiritus qui solvit Jesum."—Vulgate.

P. 312, l. 24.—*Ofte we erren in entent and desyren veniaunce in rancour.*

This characteristic confession of Wyclif's fault of temper should not be overlooked. Cf. Introduction, p. xlv.

P. 314, l. 7.—*Wo is me for I heelde myn pees.*

"Væ mihi, quia tacui!"—Vulgate.

P. 314, l. 16.—*Poul biddiþ tymothe to reprove, to preie, & to blame.*

"Argue, obsecra, increpa."—Vulgate.

P. 316, l. 14.—*Sanctity of the friar's habits.*

This common superstition is several times mentioned by Wyclif. "Et tantam vim virtutis ponunt in suis habitibus quod sperant si persona aliqua, vir vel femina, moriatur in ipsis non dampnabitur ad infernum."—*Purgatorium Secte Christi* (MS. Ashburnham, lf. 51b). And again, "Unde multe sunt hereses in tali materia introducte. Ut quod sint habitus fratrum tam sacri et tam virtuosii quod nullus mortuus in istis habitibus dampnabitur ad infernum."—*Tract on Matthew xxiii. cap. 3* (MS. Ashb. lf. 72). Compare *Colloquies of Erasmus: Funus and Exsequia Seraphica*.

P. 316, l. 29.—*And þat men mai see wel·bi growyng & colour of here body.*"

Cf. song in the Appendix to Brewer's *Monumenta Franciscana* (p. 602):

"Men may se by their contynauce  
That thai are men of grete penaunce,  
And also that their sustynauce  
Symple is and wayke.  
I have lyued now fourty yers,  
And fatter men about the neres  
þit sawe I neuer than are thes frers,  
In contreys ther thai rayke."

P. 321, l. 7.—*Men þat ben wandrynge in þis weye.*

Viator is the word generally used by Wyclif in his Latin works to signify man living on the earth.

P. 321, l. 9.—*What lif þat plesih more to god is betere priere to god.*

"Cum quelibet res dicit deo seipsam, fidelis operarius suis operibus deum melius et ecclesie utilius exoraret."—*Speculum Militantis Ecclesie*, cap. 29 (MS. Ashburnham, lf. 109b).

P. 321, l. 17.—*þat þei liuen honestliche in chirche.*

"Arguitur enim communiter quod fratres multum prosunt ecclesie et non nocent, cum habent domos atque ecclesias, quibus regna multipliciter decorantur."—*Supplementum Trialogi*, cap. viii. (p. 444, Lechler's ed.).

P. 322, l. 8.—*þe þyngis shulden mous men to be glad of sich byldyng.*

There is something wrong here. Wyclif cannot have put these three reasons for gladness into the mouth of his opponents, even in irony; while to himself they would be causes of sorrow, as he says (l. 20).

P. 327, l. 26.—*Mathew tellih þou crist confessed to his sadur.*

"In illo tempore respondens Jesus dixit: confiteor tibi Pater, etc."—*Vulg.*

P. 328, l. 5.—*Side note.*

In the Dublin MS. C.C. this tract is not divided into chapters.

P. 328, l. 21.—*Til Innocens cam.*

"Duplex est confessio singulariter deo facta et confessio ex institutione Innocencii tercii facta proprio sacerdoti. Prima est dignior, fundabilior et necessarior quam secunda, quia de prima confessione et penitencia loquitur scriptura generaliter et nusquam de secunda; immo videtur multis, cum ecclesia melius militavit per mille annos et amplius sine illa."—*Sermons*, Part iv. Ser. 6 (MS. T.C.C. 296e). Confession was first made of general obligation in the 4th Lateran Council under Innocent III.

P. 329, l. 3.—*Makers of þis laws weren so marrid, etc.*

"Sed gramadici [sic] cum adiutorio logicorum impugnant hanc legem, dicentes quod solum pro ermosfroditis de virtute vocabuli fuit facta." *De contrarietate duorum Dominorum*, cap. 6 (MS. Ashburnham, lf. 46b).

The bull runs "Omnis utriusque sexus."

P. 331, l. 14.—*Proper prestus ben vnable.*

The exaggeration of difficulties here is rather extravagant. The proper priest was as a rule the curate of the parish, but there were many cases in which the penitent might choose another confessor, *e.g.* if the priest were indiscreet, a babbler, or in any way personally affected by the sin to be confessed (see Myro's Instructions for Parish Priests, line 824 et seq.). The real mischief seems rather to have been in the multitude of licensed confessors, friars and others, who had no knowledge of their penitents, and exercised no good influence over them. Chaucer's Parson in his "Tale" insists upon the evil of "departyng of schrift." Cf. notes to pp. 9 and 224.

P. 332, last line.—*Men seyn þat greks han.*

The Greek Church enjoins private confession, and has a special office for the administration of the rite. The form of absolution in that Office is as follows: "O my spiritual child, who dost confess to my humility, I, a humble sinner, have no power on earth to remit sins. This God alone can do. Yet by reason of that divine charge which was committed to the Apostles after the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ in the words: 'Whosoever sins ye remit,' etc., and by that encouraged, we say: whatsoever thou hast confessed to my most lowly humility, and whatsoever thou hast omitted to confess, either through ignorance or any forgetfulness, may God forgive thee, both in this world and in that which is to come." *The Prayer Book Interleaved, Campion and Beament*, p. 221, Rivingtons, 1866.

P. 334, l. 9.—*Riche men haden occasioun to drede not for to synne.*

"Ut pauperes possent de remissione sui peccati quo ad dominum desperare, et divites possent blasfeme credere quod ab omni peccato suo per impositionem manuum antichristi possent sine dolore quem deus instituit liberari."—Tract on Matt. xxiii. (MS. Ashburnham, lf. 71).

P. 334, l. 4 from bottom.—*Queenes, duchesses and oþer ladies han confessours.*

So in the Tract on Matthew xxiii.: "Ista autem verba hiis novis sectis pertinenter poterunt applicari, cum sint duces dominorum et dominarum, episcoporum et multorum magnatum" (MS. Ashburnham, lf. 78.)

P. 341, l. 10.—*And þus þe reisynȝis, etc.*

This allegorical interpretation of Christ's three miracles of raising the dead to life is taken from the Fathers. See Trench on the Miracles, p. 427. He gives a quotation from Donne, which illustrates the passage very well: "If I be dead within doors (if I have sinned in my heart), why *suscitavit in domo*, Christ gave a resurrection to the ruler's daughter within doors, in the house. If I be dead in the gate (if I have sinned in the gates of my soul), in my eyes or ears or hands, in actual sins, why *suscitavit in porta*, Christ gave a resurrection to the young man at the gate of Nain. If I be dead in the grave (in customary and habitual sins), why *suscitavit in sepulcro*, Christ gave a resurrection to Lazarus in the grave too."

P. 343, l. 10.—*And þus freris myzten telle þe puple, etc.*

"Et sic posset proterviens totum sensum Scripturæ subvertere, negando sensum literalem et fingendo sensum figurativum ad libitum."—De Veritate Scripturæ, c. 2 (quoted by Lechler, i. 486).

P. 344, l. 27.—*Worde þat crist had to hisse apostlis whenne he had quickened lazarus.*

"Christus eciam in persona propria suscitavit lazarum de sepulcro, et mandavit postmodum suis apostolis solvere ipsum ab institis quibus sensibilibus est ligatus, ac si vellet dicere in figura: deus est qui tollit peccata mundi, sed suis fidelibus concedit postmodum potestatem ad dimissionem illum populo declarandum."—Tract on Matthew xxiii. c. 2 (MS. Ashburnham, lf. 706).

P. 347, l. 1.—The words "opera sine fide" are an addition either of preacher or scribe. "3°" is a mistake, the verse being James ii. 26.

P. 348, l. 21.—*But in þre maneres may mennus feiþ fayle.*

"Sed hec fides deficit in nobis hodie tripliciter. Primo, scutum fidei omnino vel secundum plurimum in multis abest, ut patet de infidelibus extra Christianismum, et illi sunt omnino accensi jaculis hostium. Secundi vero licet habeant magnam partem istius scuti cum habent multa foramina defectus fidei . . . Tercii vero sunt hii qui, licet habeant scutum fidei integrum tamen nimis remissum vel tenue."—Early Sermons, No. 6, MS. Lambeth.

P. 349, l. 2 from bottom.—*For feiþ is of thingus . . . of good þinge in þe blis of heuen.*

"Spes vero ut distinguitur contra fidem respicit bona speranti futura. Fides vero est de preteritis, presentibus, et futuris, tam bonis quam malis, pertinentibus et impertinentibus."—Early Sermons, III. Lambeth MS. (part i. No. 25 in T.C.C. MS.).

P. 350, l. 13.—*Neþer we witen ne we trowe now to be savyd.*

"Proposito mihi si salvabor nec concedo nec nego nec dubito, sed spero."—*Speculum Militantis Ecclesie*, cap. 12 (MS. Ashburnham, lf. 1136). Wyclif always emphatically denies the possibility of assurance. In his tract "De Blasphemia," he says, "If þo pope asked me wheþer I were ordeyned to be saved, or predestinate, I wolde sey þat I hoped so, but I wolde not swere hit, ne ferme hit wiþouten condicioun, þof he grettly punyscht me; ne denye hit, ne doute hit wolde I no wey" (S.E.W. III. 426). See introduction, p. xxxvi.

P. 357, l. 10.—*But it is nouȝt or accident worse þan ony breed.*

This is one of Wyclif's favourite objections to Transubstantiation. The substance of bread was gone, but the accidents remained and without substance; for the friars would not allow that the whiteness, roundness, etc., of the host were accidents of Christ's body. Consequently the consecrated host was a mere nothing; accidents with no underlying substance, and so inferior to a straw which had a substantial existence. So in the tract on Matthew xxiv. he says, "Papa dicitur dogmatizare quod illa hostia consecrata nec est panis nec corpus Christi, sed unum incognitum infinitum minus bonum quam hostia non sacra" (MS. Ashburnham, lf. 58).



P. 362, l. 15.—*þis state or power is þe vicar of þe god-heede.*

"Secunda pars mee militantis ecclesie forent domini temporales, qui debent esse vicarii deitatis. Ideo sepe meminit augustinus quomodo rex est vicarius deitatis."—*Dialogus*, chap. i. (MS. Ashburnham, lf. 97).

P. 363, l. 12.—*þis state in þe chirohe is þe vicar of þe manhede of criste.*

"Unde Augustinus sepe asserit quod tales domini sunt vicarii deitatis, sicut sacerdotes . . . sunt vicarii humanitatis Christi."—*De Servitute Civili et Dominio Seculari*, cap. 2 (MS. Ashburnham, lf. 83b). Compare p. 375, l. 8.

P. 368, l. 25.—*Sum of hem han saide þat þai schuld gete owte of þe secular hondis alle the temporal lordeschip þat þai may."*

So in the *Dialogus*, Wyclif puts into the mouth of Mendacium, "Videtur quod doceri debet e converso quod clerici auferant totum seculare dominium a brachio seculari et reservent ex integro ipsum sibi."—(MS. Ashburnham, lf. 119.)

P. 374, l. 14.—*þe holy doctoure Odo.*

"Odo" is quoted in the *Apology for the Lollards*, where Dr. Todd has identified a passage as coming from the *Flores Sermonum* of Odo de Sheritona, "an English Cistercian Monk, who flourished about the year 1184, and whose sermons were published at Paris in 1520" (Dr. Todd's note, p. 158). I should like to find this passage, as it is an early date for the mention of the voice heard at the time of the endowment, but the *Flores Sermonum* is not in the British Museum.

P. 374, l. 15.—*þe bissynes of schipard and spiritual mornyngs or weylunge is slayne.*

In the list of names with meanings usually appended to the Vulgate we find Abel = Luctus. This applies only to Abel as the name of a city, but Odo seems not to have troubled himself with such minor distinctions. In the same list is Cain = possessio.

P. 379, line 7, et seq.—*Silvester's sin in accepting the donation of Constantine.*

"Nam licet cesar ex sua stulticia vellet privilegium tale concedere, viri tamen apostolici foret ipsum renuere. Ideo qui nititur excusare in hoc Silvestrum vel alium a peccato nititur accusare Christum et contempnere Christi legem. . . . Supponi tamen potest quod sanctus Silvester de isto crimine postmodum penitebat."—*De Christo et suo Adversario Antichristo* (ed. B. Buddensieg, Gotha, 1880).

P. 377, l. 2 from bottom.—*Constantyne was helid of god by grace ministred to hym bi silvestre.*

P. 379, l. 2.—*Whan he was souzte to passion, he hidde hym sylfe.*

The legend of Silvester tells us that Constantine was smitten with leprosy, and by counsel of the senators and heathen pontiff 3000 children were collected in order that the emperor might be cured by bathing in their blood. Constantine however refused to sacrifice so many lives for his own health. The next night Peter and Paul appeared to him and told him to send for Silvester, who was then hiding from perse-

cution in Mount Seraptis (Soracte). The purifying waters of baptism healed the Emperor of his leprosy.

P. 380, l. 3.—*As Gorram saip.*

Nicholas de Gorran, a Dominican, was a Fellow of Merton. He was confessor to Philip the Fair, of France, and died A.D. 1295. His Commentary on the Acts, the Epistles, and Apocalypse, was printed at Antwerp (1620) from a MS. in Merton College. I have looked into it, but cannot find the passage here quoted.

P. 380, l. 15.—*Soler.*

The meaning generally given to the word is "an upper room," (see Halliwell and Gloss. to W.V.), and in Joshua ii. 6 Rahab made the spies "stie up in to the soler." The word seems, however, to have been used for any living-room. In W.V. it is frequently given as an alternative to souping-room in translating *cenaculum*, and in the account-books of King's Hall we find the fellows lodged "in solario juxta gardinum; et in solario sub eis" (Hist. Man. Com. First Report p. 84).

P. 382, l. 14.—*But whan we argue of an creature, etc.*

"Cum ex fide capimus quod nullus sanctorum, quantacunque sanctitate prepolleat, est in dicto vel consuetudine credendus, nisi de quanto illud consonat cum Christo qui est prima veritas. Et per consequens, habita a Christo vivaciori evidencia ad credendum contrarium, istud est ex illa forciore evidencia dimittendum."—*Speculum Militantis Ecclesie*, c. 16 (MS. Ashburnham, lf. 102).

P. 382, l. 28.—*Gabriel schal blow his horns.*

One of the articles condemned at the Council of Constance as Wyclif's is—"Audacter prognostico omnibus istis sectis et suis complicitibus, quod non defendunt fidelibus quod sacramentum sit accidens sine subjecto antequam Christus et tota triumphans ecclesia venerit equitans, in finali judicio super flatum angeli Gabrielis."—Brown's *Fasciculus*, i. 267.

P. 382, last line.—*Chesesaunce.*

Chesesaunce or chevissance seems to be the payment made for a loan. Usury was forbidden alike by ecclesiastical and common law, but capitalists would not lend without consideration. Sir John Paston's agent writes to him: "I trust that I have studyed such a mene that, upon surete as ye may make, to gete you an Cli or CC mark to be lante unto yow for an halfe yere, with oute any chevissaunce or losse of good by yow."—Paston Letters (Gairdner), ii. 297.

In Rot. Parl. ii. 173, some merchants accused of extortion pray for inquiry lest men should be afraid to deal with the King 'en chevanches.'

Comp. Chaucer, Schipmannes Tale, 329, and Piers the Plowman (B.), v. 249, with Mr. Skeat's note.

P. 385, l. 4.—*Prisonyng and hangyng.*

The exercise of criminal jurisdiction by churchmen was felt to be a scandal, although the advantages and dignity attaching to it made it an object of ambition. Bishop Pecock ingeniously pleads that the

steward or bailiff who held the court was, for that purpose, the King's officer. "Whatever man the bischop or abbot so chesith, the King therwith and theryn committith his power to the same person so chosun, and he ouyte not but in an vnpropre maner of speche be clepid (namelich in maters of deeth) to be stiward of the bischop or of the abbot, but of the King."—Pecock's Repressor, p. 369.

P. 387, l. 16.—*Per schulde be on no wyse a neddy man and a beggere amonge hem.*

"Et omnino indigens et mendicus non erit inter vos."—Vulgate.

P. 389, l. 22.—*Perfore þer may noon oþe, etc.*

"Carte, inquit, concessa de perpetua elemosyna sunt implenda. Sed idem est procuratorem diaboli sic arguere ac si intenderit, si quis iuraverit se occidere fratrem suum vel aliquod facinus pro parte diaboli contra dominum perpetrare, ex fide suo de servando juramentum tenetur illud facinus adimplere. Et sic ratione diaboli tenetur manere perpetuo in suo crimine contra Christum."—De Contrarietate duorum Dominorum, cap. 4 (MS. Ashburnham, lf. 44b).

P. 393, l. 25.—*No man berynge his knyghthode to god.*

"Nemo militans Deo."—Vulgate.

P. 395, l. 4.—*Saynte gregori wrote to þe defensoure of rome.*

"Gregorius Romano defensore nostro Siciliæ. Perlatum ad nos est reverendissimum fratrem nostrum Basilium episcopum (of Capua) velut unum de laicis in causis sæcularibus occupari et prætoriiis deservire. [Another reading is 'velut unum de ultimis in causis occupari et prætoriiis inutiliter deservire.'] Quæ res quoniam et ipsum vilem reddit, et reverentiam sacerdotalem annihilat statim ut experientia tua hoc preceptum suscepit, eum ita ad revertendum districta exsecutione compellat, quatenus ei illic te insistente quinque diebus sub qualibet excusatione immorari non liceat ne, si quolibet modo eum ibidem moram habere permiseris, cum ipso apud nos graviter incipias esse culpabilis."—Letter, book x. 10.

P. 399, l. 13.—Parysiensis, probably Peter, "Cantor Parisiensis," whose Verbum Abbreviatum is quoted in the Apology for the Lollards, ed. by Dr. Todd for the Camden Society, p. 53. See Dr. Todd's note, p. 154.

P. 417, l. 7 from bottom.—*Size maner of consentis.*

"Consentit operans, defendens, consilium dans,  
Ac auctorisans, non iuvans nec reprehendens."

Quoted by Lechler in a note to the De Officio Pastoralis, p. 15.

P. 428, l. 4.—*Preatis wiþoute degre of scole may profite, etc.*

Nam inspiratio sacerdotum simplicium tam in noticia quam in operatione voluntaria plus proderit capacitati fidelium laicorum quam omnes dicte universitates cum studiis suis adjacentibus. Speculum Militantis Ecclesie, c. 26 (MS. Ashburnham, 112b).

P. 428, l. 8.—*God wole suffere noon yuel be don but ȝif good come þerof.*

"Dicunt enim fideles theologi quod deus bonus non potest aliquid

malum sinere, nisi ipsum faciat multum bonum."—Exposition of Matt. xxiii. cap. 5 (MS. Ashburnham, lf. 74).

P. 428, line 5 from bottom.—*In making of þes maystria þen þore mennus godis ofte wasted.*

For the cost of taking a Master's degree, see Mr. Anstey's preface to *Munimenta Academica*, p. xc, where the various expenses are enumerated. Among other things the new master was bound to feast all the Regents, or pay a fine of 20 marks. It is true that this was legally binding only on those who possessed a certain income, but it was often difficult for men to plead poverty. Attempts were made to restrain extravagance by statute, but probably with little effect. Wyclif speaks elsewhere of "*sumptuosas spoliaciones pauperum ad incepciones ac graduaciones*" (Ashburnham, lf. 75b).

P. 429, l. 5.—*Nouȝt groundiȝ hem but nygromansye.*

This charge of necromancy is not to be taken too literally. In the tract *de Contrarietate duorum Dominorum* Wyclif brings the same accusation, but he explains the sense of it so carefully that it is clear that he is only indulging himself in the use of another hard name for his opponents. "*Extendendo*," he says, "*nomen nigromancie, potest quelibet ars falsa vel non fundata in lege domini ars nigromantica bene dici. Et sic pseudo predicantes vel practizantes in lege papali, vel alia lege hominum in lege domini non fundata, possunt nigromantici vere dici, quia omnes illi discunt et practizant legem mortuam ex instinctu diaboli*" (MS. Ashburnham, lf. 43b).

P. 429, l. 7.—*þe wit of goddis lawe shulde be tauȝt in þat tunge þat is more knowun.*

"*Lingua enim, sive hebreæ, sive græcæ, sive latinæ, sive anglicæ, est quasi habitus legis domini. Et per quemcunque talem habitum ejus sententia magis vere cognoscitur a fideli, ipse est codex plus rationabiliter acceptandus.*"—*De Contrarietate duorum Dominorum*, cap. 2 (MS. Ashburnham, lf. 44).

P. 429, l. 27.—*Lordis of england han þe bible in freynsch.*

There is a curious confirmation of this statement in M. Paulin Paris's "*Catalogue of the MSS. in the Royal Library at Paris.*" The oldest complete French Bible in the Library is a fine MS. of the fourteenth century, which belonged in the fifteenth century to Louis de Bruges, seigneur de la Gruthuyse (No. 6701). Of this book M. Paris says, "*L'écriture et le dialecte du numero dont nous nous occupons semblent indiquer qu'il fut exécuté en Angleterre.*" It is possible that Wyclif may have seen this very volume in the hands of one of his many friends at the Court. We must not omit to notice that a revised translation was undertaken by a contemporary of Wyclif, Raoul de Presles (d. 1383). He does not seem to have got beyond the Psalms. The MS. in the National Library containing this is numbered 6818<sup>3</sup>.

P. 429, line 3 from bottom.—*As men seyen in þe pley of york.*

Among the returns from Gilds made in 1389 is one from the Gild of the Lord's Prayer at York, from which we learn that "once on a time

a play, setting forth the goodness of the Lord's Prayer, was played in the city of York, in which play all manner of vices and sins were held up to scorn and the virtues were held up to praise. This play met with so much favour that many said, 'Would that this play could be kept up in this city, for the health of souls and for the comfort of the citizens and neighbours.' In consequence a gild was formed, with the main object of keeping up the play, but combining with this some forms of mutual aid common in such societies. For the greater honour of the Lord's Prayer the Gild maintained a candle bearer of seven lights (in token of the seven supplications in the prayer), which was hung in the Minster, and lighted on Sundays and feast-days. "Also they are bound to make, and as often as need be to renew, a table shewing the whole meaning and use of the Lord's Prayer, and to keep this hanging against a pillar in the said Cathedral church near to the aforesaid candle bearer." This play must be distinguished from the great play acted by the Corpus Christi Gild at York, representing the life and passion of Christ, of which a copy still remains in the possession of the Earl of Ashburnham. This gild also represented every ten years a Creed-play, bequeathed to them by William Revetor, a chantry priest of the chapel of St. William in Ousebridge. These plays were probably later, as the Corpus Christi gild was founded in 1408. The people of York kept their love for the plays after the Reformation. In 1568 there was talk of acting the Creed-play, but it came to nothing. Again in April, 1572, the Council agreed, "my lord mayor shall send for the maistir of St. Anthony's, and he to bring with him the book of the play called the Pater Noster play." Whether the master brought it, and what was done with it, I do not know. It was something to have kept the popular favour for at least two centuries.—See *English Gilds* (E.E.T.S. No. 40), p. 137: and *York Records of the Fifteenth Century*, edited by B. Davies (London, 1843), pp. 257, 267, etc.

P. 431, l. 7.—*Specife not þes nyne ordres, as þou doþ in his bokis.*

The nine orders of angels, as arranged by Dionysius in an ascending scale, are Angels, Archangels, Princedoms, Powers, Virtues, Dominations, Thrones, Cherubim and Seraphim. Of these, Colossians i. 16 supplies thrones, dominations, princedoms, powers; and Rom. viii. 13 angels and virtues (our A.V. has "powers" also here); 1 Thess. iv. 16 adds "archangel," but Cherubim and Seraphim are, I believe, not to be found in St. Paul's writings, or indeed in the New Testament.

P. 431, l. 8.—*Comyn þingis*, i.e. Universals. Wyclif, as a realist, held these to have actual being.

P. 434, l. 11, &c.—It may be worth while to give the corresponding passage in the Latin tract: "Et istud foret frenum rectoribus, ne lasciviant in esculentis vel quibuscunque concernentibus personam propriam deminutis elemosinis subditorum, ut est de lecesterniis, dorsariis, aulicis bancariis, pulvinaribus, et sumptuosis domorum ceteris ornamentis. Et idem iudicium de vestibus ac surrearum [I fancy

there is a misprint here for 'furrearum'] splendencia."—cap. xvi. p. 25.

P. 437, l. 7.—*þat þey shulden be moost dere,*" etc.

"Non vosmet ipsos defendentes, charissimi."—Vulgate.

P. 438, l. 22.—*God axij not dyuysiouns ne rymes of hym þat shulde preche.*

This is not the only place in which Wyclif speaks of the friars as preaching verses. In the tract on Matthew xxiii. he says: "Fratres predicant verba ficta et poemata ripinisata."—Ashburnham, lf. 75. I do not know what is meant by 'ripinisata.' Can it be 'rabbinized,' broken up under different heads after the fashion of the rabbinical commentators? If so, it would answer to the 'dyuysiouns' in the text.

P. 442, l. 7.—*Physic or alkemone.*

Alchemy was already in the fourteenth century discredited as being usually practised by cheats (see Chanounes Yemannes Tale, and Piers Plowman's

"Experimentz of alkenamye þe poeple to deceyue."—B. x. 212);

but here it seems to be used in the innocent sense of chemistry. The chief students of the physical sciences were among the friars, whose credit as physicians we have seen noticed (pp. 10, 224).

P. 442, l. 6 from bottom.—*We ben not holours of goddis word.*

"Non enim sumus sicut plurimi, adulterantes verbum Dei," &c.—Vulgate.

P. 443, l. 3.—*þei wolen gedere comynly godis astir þat þei han prechid.*

So in Exposition of Matthew xxiii. Wyclif says: "Et stulto stulcior potest ex usitata fratrum predicacione statim cognoscere quod gracia luci colligendi a populo statim post sermonem finaliter predicarunt" (MS. Ashburnham, lf. 75).

P. 444, l. 20.—*A wickid hayward.*

A hayward was properly a man set to look after the inclosures or cultivated ground, and prevent cattle straying upon it from the common land. His business was also to prevent trespass. Such an officer, the Feldschütz or garde champêtre, still encounters trespassers on the Continent, where, as in the England of the 14th century, the fields are not hedged off. At a time when roads were mostly mere tracks, it is easy to understand that a man so employed might abuse his powers and stop travellers even where they had a right of way; and this seems to be the drift of the text. Twice elsewhere Wyclif calls prelates haywards (S.E.W. i. 104; iii. 436), but in both cases the word is used in its secondary sense of overseer. Compare Mr. Skeat's Notes to Piers the Plowman (pp. 87, 273). The duties of the hayward as a village officer seem to have been various. In Paston Letters (i. 217, Gairdner) we find the haywards making a distress and taking a plough and two horses.

P. 445, l. 5 from bottom.—*þei deprauen (curates) to þer parischems.*

See Erasmus' Colloquy, πτωχοπλούσιοι, where two friars ask

shelter at the house of the parish priest and are harshly refused. He gives a reason which reflects no great credit on him: "Quia si conspiceretis in ædibus meis gallinam aliquam [it is hardly necessary to remark that *gallina* here is equivalent to *focaria*. The 'chicks' need even less explanation] aut pullos gallinaceos, cras in concione traducerer apud populum. Hanc soletis referre gratiam communicati hospitii." And all the friars can say is: "Non omnes sumus istiusmodi."

P. 447, l. 23.—*Shulden lorne þe laws of porfirie.*

So in *Triologus*, lib. ii. c. 1: "Eo quod juxta Porphyrium participatione speciei pures homines sunt unus homo."

P. 449, l. 5.—*þif persouns haddon no glebe," etc.*

"Si autem curatus recipit fructum istius glebe, respuendo dominationem mundanam in animo, fidelis ministratio potest ipsum quoad deum et homines excusare. Hoc tamen videtur quod fidelis curatus cum opportunitatem habuerit debet renunciare isti dominio seculari."—*Speculum Militantis Ecclesie* (MS. Ashburnham, lf. 120b).

P. 449, l. 27.—*As þei seyn, etc.*

"Sicut enim piscis sine aqua vita caret, ita sine monasterio monachus, ut dicit Eugenius Papa, 15. q. 1. Placuit."—Sermon of William of St. Amour (Fasc. Rer. Exp. ii. 43).

So in *Piers the Plowman*—

"Whanne flasches failen þe fode or þe fresche water,  
þei deyen for drouthe whanne þei drie ligge;  
Rijt so, quod Gregorie, religioun roileth  
Sterveth and stynketh and steleth lords almesses,  
That out of couent and cloystre coveyten to libbe."

—B. x. 295.

See Mr. Skeat's note on the passage, p. 93.

P. 461, l. 26.—*God's love shown in the Great Schism.*

"Dei justitia, non sinens amplius sine dirupcione ecclesiam malignancium ita stare, facit ipsam ascefolam, ejus caput in duas partes debiles dividendo."—*Sermons*, Part IV. Ser. 20 (MS. T.C.C. 309b). Compare the tract *De Pontificum Romanorum Schismate*, S.E.W. iii. 242 *et seq.*, especially p. 247.

P. 462, l. 12.—*Makiþ lordis to kyss his feet where crist wayschide his possiþis feet.*

"Valde diversum est a papa petere pedum oscula beatorum, et ipsum papam lintheo se precingere et lavare humiliter, ut Christus fecit, pedes per ordinem subditorum."—*Sermons*, IV. 8 (MS. T.C.C. 434d).

P. 462, l. 15.—*Where crist wente on his feet . . . þei seyn þis pope wole be closid in a castel, etc.*

"Christus circumivit patrias pedestre, oppressis benefaciens atque sanans. Papa residet tanquam alter cosdros in sumptuoso palacio ex spoliatio pauperum fabricato et malefacit pauperibus."—*Exposition of Matthew xxiv. c. 3* (MS. Ashburnham, lf. 57b)

"Quomodo ergo antichristus sic extollitur super Christum quod residens in palacio tanquam immobilis sufficit spiritualiter visitare totam terram habitabilem, mittendo dominative per modum citacionis cesarie post quemcunque sibi contrarium quem voluerit impugnare; revera ista non est regulacio Christi cum ipse incessit humiliter de loco in locum per civitates et castella predicans peditentim."—De Ordine Christiano, c. 4 (MS. Ashburnham, lf. 23b).

There is a rather similar passage in a tract just published by Dr. Buddensieg, De Christo et suo Adversario Antichristo, c. xii.

P. 468, l. 3 from bottom.—*Tellen more bi a cronycle of foly of an emperour.*

This refers, of course, to the story of the donation of Constantine.

P. 469, l. 10.—*Myraclis maad of deed men, etc.*

"Et secundum apostolum, 1 Cor. 3<sup>o</sup>: Si viator habuerit omnem fidem, ita ut montes transferat, caritatem autem non habuerit, nichil est. Multo magis ergo signa ostensa a deo sive diabolo in presencia corporis mortui non indicant quod sit sanctum. Ideo una de precipuis cautelis diaboli per quam seducit viantes est decepcio in hiis signis."—Speculum Militantis Ecclesie, cap. 16 (MS. Ashburnham, lf. 105b).

P. 469, last line.—*God mut nedis be cheef lord, etc.*

"Si secundum legem humanam non valet donacio nisi habita licencia domini capitalis, patenter convincitur quod non valet aliqua talis donacio nisi prehabita dei licencia, qui est dominus dominorum."—De Contrarietate duorum Dominorum (MS. Ashburnham, lf. 45).

P. 471, l. 1.—*For þis name is newe foundun, and it bitokeniþ woundirful.*

The only suggestion I can make as to this "wonderful" interpretation is that Wyclif connected Papa with *παπᾱλ*.

P. 475 l. 2.—*Anticrist myȝte not for shame canonysse þis emperour.*

Constantine was canonized by the Greeks, and his feast is on May 11, as mentioned by Higden in the Polychronicon (Lumby, vol. v, p. 142). He has never been formally canonized in the Western Church, but his name is inserted in the Acta Sanctorum, under May 21st, where we are told that in Britain several churches and altars were formerly dedicated to him. It is possible that there may be here some confusion between the Emperor Constantine and two kings of Scotland of that name who were canonized. The speech of Constantine to the Nicene Council referred to in line 15 is reported by Higden in the same place.

P. 475, l. 5.—*O cause why he dide þus was to hye his ouns prestis.*

"Sed captato tempore seduccionis populi, diabolus movebat cesarem quod, sicut ipse excellebat alios seculares dominos, sic sacerdos suus, quem vocat romanum pontificem, debet excellere quoslibet alios sacerdotes."—Speculum Militantis Ecclesie, c. 34 (MS. Ashburnham, lf. 115b).

P. 476, l. 3.—*A coorde is a good þing, etc.*

"Nam chorda est creatura bona Dei, sicut et collum hominis, et



tamen modus habendi illam circa collum hominis strangulati est satis odibilis."—Trial. lib. iv. c. 17, p. 306.

P. 477, l. 17.—*Our bileus techiþ vs þat a man doiþ no lengere merit, etc.*

"Videtur autem mihi quod securissimum foret hominem pro tempore quo viat juste vivere, et non in suffragio executorum vel aliorum oratorum pro suis temporalibus nimis confidere."—Sermons, IV. 2 (MS. T.C.C. lf. 292*d*).

P. 482, l. 7.—*þif þe pope, for bidding of a kyng, grauntiþ so large indulgencia, etc.*

So in the De Sermone Domini in Monte (chap. 12), "Dicitur quendam papam fecisse oracionem quamdam et concessisse ad instanciam regis francie duo milia annorum, quocienscunque habilis ipsam dixerit inter consecracionem et agnus dei."—(MS. T.C.C. lf. 357*b*). Compare also S.E.W. i. 354. Dr. Todd, in a note to the Lollards' Apology (p. 122), has shown that this refers to a bull of Boniface VIII. He quotes the prayer from a copy of "Hours of the Virgin," in which it occurs with this rubric: "Our holy father the pope Bonifacius sextus hath graunted to all them that say deuoutly this prayer folowynge betwene the eleuacyon of our lorde et the iij Agnus dei x. thousande years of pardon." A similar rubric from another edition says 2000 years. An allusion to this prayer and indulgence is to be found also on p. 82.



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- Clerkis, learned men, 4.  
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- Convents, splendour of, 5, 27, 49, 321, 448, 490.  
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 Costelewe, costly, 121, 129, 205.  
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 Cotumax, contumacious, 184.  
 Couche, lie, dwell, 30, 60.  
 Couden, could, 81.  
 Coueitise, covetousness, 2.  
 Couenable, suitable, 217; couenabliche, 314.  
 Couent, convent, 127.  
 Couere, the ark, 55.  
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 Countynge, keeping accounts, 65.  
 Coupable, culpable, 312.  
 Coupabilnesse, guiltiness, 335.  
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 Cristene, baptize, 112.  
 Cristendom, Christianity, 102.  
 Cristismasse games, 206.  
 Croceris, crosiers, 210.  
 Crois, cross, 45.  
 Croke, turn, 230.  
 Crokid, deformed, 27.  
 Copen, crept, *part.* 296.  
 Croune, the tonsure, 125.  
 Cruelliere, more cruelly, 98.  
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- Dancing, helps men to preferment, 65, 246.
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- Debatis, quarrels, 59.
- Debts, rich men delay payment of unjustly, 25.
- Debts, distinguished from alms (or tithes), 423.
- Debt, imprisonment for, 200, 211, 214; incurred through drunkenness, 217.
- Decknys, deacons, 364.
- Dede, dead, 5, 23.
- Dede, deed, 6, 70.
- Dedis of apostlis, the Acts, 195, 383.
- Deel, *subs.* share.
- Defaute, defect, 4.
- Defendid, forbidden, 17.
- Defensoure of Rome : defensor civitatis was the title of a magistrate whose chief duty was to afford protection against oppression on the part of the governor; he had a subordinate civil jurisdiction, 395.
- Defoulid, trodden down (cf. W. V., Luke x. 19 : "power of defoulunge othir tredinge on serpentis"), 18.
- Defourmed, ill made, 349.
- Degeneracy of mankind, 38, 93.
- Degrees, university, of doubtful advantage, 428, 529.
- Degrees, expense of taking, 428, 530.
- Deisee, discomfort, 179.
- Deyitte, ? dignity (perhaps daintiness), 211.
- Deynte, dignity, 220.
- Delioes, pleasures, 124.
- Delip, distributes, 161; delynge, 134; delid, 181.
- Deme, *v.* judge, 84; *perf.* demeden, 231; dempten, 393; *part.* demyd, 33.
- Denes, deans (rural), 249.
- Departe, separate, 199; departing, distributing, 81.
- Depnesse, depth, 62.
- Deprauen, slander, speak ill of, 445; depraveden, 312; deprauynge, 168.
- Derrere, dearer, 6.
- Derne, secret, 353.
- Derworþi, dear, 98.
- Deschaunt, descant, 77, 91, 191, 501.
- Despair, the sin against the Holy Ghost, 351.
- Devoyde, remove ("But for a short time myself I devoyde." — Coventry Mysteries, 243), 182.
- Dichis, ditches, 420.
- Dictis, Dicta, a book by Grossetête, 385.
- Diffiede, distrusted, 479.
- Dijschis, dishes, 434.
- Dijt, prepared, 340.
- Dilauy, lavish, 306. The word occurs in S.E.W. iii. 388, and we find also delaunynesse, ii. 298, and in both cases it bears this meaning. I can find no other example of it.
- Dymes, tithes, 57.
- Dirige, mattins in the office for the dead, 15, 177, 191, 212, 494, 517.
- Disceisen, discomfort, 11.
- Disceit, deceit, 61; disseyt, 461.
- Dysceyuen, deceive, 4.
- Discess, departure, 299.
- Dischargiþ, relieves, 47.
- Disclaundren, slander, 138.
- Disgratid, degraded, 246.
- Dispeir, despair, 15.
- Dispende, spend, 433.

- Dispensations, from rule of friars, 182, 223.  
 Dispensis, expenditure, 321.  
 Dispit, spite, 35; contempt, 17.  
 Dispitusly, pitilessly, 160.  
 Disport, playground, 322.  
 Dissert, desert, deserving, 351.  
 Disse, discomfort, 61; deise, 179.  
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 Dominion, belongs to laymen, 117, 276, 373, 391, 451.  
 Domnpnesse, damnable, 126.  
 Don of, take off, 348.  
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 Doren, dare, 36; dorn, 73.  
 Doseris, hangings for the walls, so called because they came at the back of the people sitting, 434.  
 Doseyns, dozens (of jurors), 182.  
 Doump, dumb, 420.  
 Dowe, endow, 284; *part.* dowid, 124; dowing, 445.  
 Dreynt, drowned, 62, 444.  
 Dreng, drag, 473.  
 Dress, clerical extravagance in, 60, 92, 121, 148.  
 Dryncching, drowning, 59.  
 Drit, filth, 22.  
 Dronkelewe, drunken, given to drink, 193, 217.  
 Droof, drove, 241.  
 Drowyn, drew, 105.  
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 Dwe, due, 17.  
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 Eddris, adders, 315.  
 Eelde, old age, 411; elde, 173.  
 Eeris, ears, 345.  
 Eft, again, 339, 354, 363.  
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 Ehte, eighth, 220.  
 Eien, eyes, 281; eijen, 99.  
 Eyris, heirs, 476.  
 Eise, ease, 134.  
 Eke, also, 57.  
 Eldris, parents, 49; ancestors, 439.  
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- Encombe, to set fast, as in the mire, 70.  
 Encresceþ, increases, 155.  
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 Endurid, hardened, 25.  
 Enfamynen, starve, 150.  
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 Enforce, strengthen, 111.  
 Enforsid, urged, pressed, 378.  
 Englund, engeland, 22, 276.  
 Enhaunsen, exalt, 75.  
 Enleuene, eleven, 482.  
 Enoc, Enoch, 308.  
 Enpeyringe, injury, 389.  
 Enproprid, appropriated, 81.  
 Enpugne, impugn, 391; enpugnyd, 369.  
 Enqueren, inquire for, seek after, 130; enquiryed, 279.  
 Ensaumplerie, example, 230.  
 Ensaumplid, exemplid, 119.  
 Ensuren, assure, 17.  
 Entails, 391.  
 Enterdite, put under an interdict, 63; *part.* entirdited, 79; enterditynge, 79.  
 Entirmete, meddle, 394; entirmeten of, 159.  
 Entre, entry, 94.  
 Entre, entire, 106; entreire, 107.  
 Entrike, entangle, 393.  
 Enuenumen, poison, 92.  
 Enyoie þe, *refl.* rejoice, 243.  
 Enyonye, enjoin, 43; enyoyned, 49.  
 Ephesyns, 232.  
 Ere, ear, 328; eris, 8; erris, 117.  
 Erryng, wandering (stars), 308.  
 Erchedekene, archdeacon, 455, 456.  
 Es, is, 82.  
 Esen, *v.* ease, 30.  
 Esi, easy, 2.  
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 Fallas, fallacy, 425.  
 Falsed, falsehood, 260.  
 Falsen, give the lie to, 352.  
 Famularite, familiarity, 44.  
 Famulorum, a prayer, 134, 195, 509.

- Fantom, vanity, 186; fantym, 321.  
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 I hald noȝt elles bot filth and fantome.
- Pricke of Conscience, 1196; *see*  
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- Faren, go on, act, 96, 138.
- Faste, busily, steadily, 6, 15.
- Fauȝty, faulty, 387; fawty, 364.
- Fawte, default, 388.
- Fautouris, abettors, 69.
- Febliþ, weakens, 454.
- Feen, mire, 62.
- Feiris, fairs, 280.
- Fel, fierce, 476; *adv.* felly, 456.
- Feld, field, 10.
- Felde, fell, 477.
- Fend, fiend, devil, 9.
- Fendliche, devilish, 304.
- Fer, far, 10; ferre, 31; *comp.*  
 ferrer, 381.
- Fercastynge, scheming, crafty,  
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- Feren, frighten, 79.
- Ferforþli, far, 391.
- Ferne, farm, 243.
- Ferþe, fourth, 111; firþe, 220.
- Festis, feasts, 23.
- Fep, faith, 79.
- Ficchid, fixed, 307.
- Fier, fire, 78.
- Fiftenþes, taxes, 66. *See* note,  
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- Figuren, transfigure, 288.
- Fis, fish, 449.
- Fille, fulfil, satisfy, 217.
- Fynde, provide for, 151, 176;  
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- Fynden vp, invent, 199.
- Fyndyngis, inventions, 77; fyn-  
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- Flaundris, Flanders, 152. *See*  
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- Flen, flee, 34; *perf.* fley, 195;  
*part.* fleed, 173; fleynge, 218.
- Fleys, flesh, 411, 435.
- Fleysly, fleshly, sensual, 474.
- Floriȝhid, ornate, flowery, 445.
- Flowen, fled, 71.
- Fode, food, 150.
- Folde, bow, bend aside, 288, 426.
- Fole, fool, 10.
- Fool, foolish, 118; folie, 7; foly,  
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- Folily, foolishly, 290; folyliche,  
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- Fonnyd, foolish, 20; insipid, 57,  
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- Fonnydnesse, foolishness, 266.
- Forbarre, hinder, 61; forbaren,  
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- Forbeden, forbid, 59; *perf.* for-  
 beed, 287; *part.* forbodun, 376.
- Fordo, destroy, 38; fordoþe, 345;  
 forðiden, 314.
- Fordon, done before, 339.
- Forfenden, forbid, 303.
- Forfetur, loss, 348.
- Forȝeue, abandon, give up, 200;  
 (forȝeuyng manasse, 232; trans-  
 lates the Vulg. "remittentes  
 minas," Eph. vi. 9).
- Forgoer, leader, 383; translates  
 the Vulg. "præcessor"; for-  
 goeris, forerunners, 128.
- Forrouris, furs, 12.
- Forswere, perjure, 63; forsworn,  
 75; forswerynge, 253.
- Forþ, may not forþ, cannot go on,  
 155, 222; usen forþ, continue  
 to use, 248.
- Forþinke, repent, 235; forþink-  
 yng, 338.
- Forwhi, because, 44.
- Foule, foully, 9.

- Foundement, foundation, 260.  
 Franchisen togydir, are under the same (private) jurisdiction, 385.  
 Francis, St., Testament of, 45, 497.  
 Franciscans evade their rule, 49, 498; say they are released by the Pope, 47.  
 Fraternity, letters of, 4, 5, 12, 27, 160, 262.  
 Fraticelli, 219; persecuted by other friars, 12, 51.  
 Fraunse, France, 429.  
 Fraunseis, St. Francis, 40; fraunseis, 301.  
 Freedom of God's law, or the Gospel, 17, 31, 67, 253, 256, 299, 330.  
 Freelite, frailty, 344.  
 Freewill, 108, 110.  
 Freliche, freely, 4.  
 French Bible, 429.  
 Frere, friar, 40.  
 Friars, Wyclif's opposition to, xliii; preach for gain, 442, 445; evade their rule 47, etc.; errors about the Host, 19, 349, 352.  
 Friars hear confession, xlv, 9, 27, 181, 224, 492, 518, 525; slander parish priests, 445, 532; waste money in adorning their churches, 8, 181, 321.  
 Friars, unchaste, 6, 10, 12, 224, 305, 309, 490.  
 Friars practise as physicians, 10, 219, 224, 492.  
 Friars send money out of the realm to the King's enemies, 50; build extravagantly, 5, 27, 50, 316, 490; steal children, 9, 10, 51, 68, 133, 223, 269, 278.  
 Friars, character of their preaching, 8, 16, 105, 444; some good, 298.  
 Friars' habits, sanctity attributed to, 316, 523.  
 Friste, first, 245.  
 Fryste fruytis, firstfruits, 66.  
 Froytis, fruits, 66.  
 Fulbut, headstrong, 213.  
 Fullre, at þe, sufficiently, 55.  
 Fullire, headlong (the Dublin MS. has fulbere), 256.  
 Furniture, expensive, used by priests, 6, 434, 531.  
 Furroure, furs, 434.  
 Gabbe, to lie, 297, 331; gabben, *ind.* 290; gabbynge, 207.  
 Gabbyngis, lies, 305, 442.  
 Gabriel, 382, 528.  
 Gadlyngis, slanderers, 214.  
 Gamelyn, 513.  
 Gamenes, games, 246.  
 Garlek, for goose-stuffing, 82.  
 Garnement, garment, 50, 302.  
 Gaten, got, *perf.* 73.  
 Gateways, embattled, to abbeys, 15, 494.  
 Gatis, ways, 191.  
 Gaunt, John of, ix, x, xi, xii, xxv, xxix, xxx.  
 Gederen, gedre, gather, 14, 46; gedreþ, 6; gederynge, 154; gederid, 431.  
 Gederid, compound (a gedrid name), 431.  
 Gendren, engender, 146; gendrid, 45.  
 Gendring, used of consecrating the elements (gendring[Christ's] body), 441.  
 Gendrure, begetting, 441.  
 Generalte, the whole body, 43.  
 Gentry, bad example set by, 207.  
 George, St., 99.  
 Gessen, suppose, think, 105, 192; gessedest, 67.  
 Gestis, guests, 42.  
 Getiþ, begets, 441.  
 Gettere, boaster, 23, 243, 249; also written iettere.  
 Gidre, *v.* gather, 128.  
 Giesy, Gehazi, 67; giezi, 378, 380.  
 Gildene mouth, translation of Chrysostom, 104.

- Gilis, deceits, 305, 323.  
 Gilours, deceivers, 309.  
 Gyltif, guilty, 9, 112, 272; gylti, 10.  
 Gises, fashions, 186.  
 Gyternynge, playing on the cittern, a sort of guitar, 9.  
 Glaue, *v.* chatter, 330.  
 þiue it vp, yield, allow oneself beaten, 296.  
 Glastonbury kitchen, 494.  
 Glebe, 449, 533.  
 Glymerynge, indistinct perception, 339.  
 Glorious, ostentatious, 162.  
 Glose, commentary, 12.  
 Gloseris, commentators, 284.  
 Glosynge, commenting, 135, 148.  
 Glotyne, gluttony, 86.  
 Glutton's argument, 97, 454.  
 Gnackis, tricks, 184.  
 Gnare, snare, 437.  
 God is a courteous lord, 284, 291, 340; he is liberal, 434.  
 God, presence of, in all creatures, 203, 208, 516.  
 God's law, a favourite expression of the Lollards, 254.  
 Gogelen, squint, look aside, 341.  
 Gold exchanged for lead (in paying for bulls), 23, 66, 245.  
 Gold drained out of England to the Papal Court, 22, 66, 92, 144.  
 Golet, gullet, 200.  
 Gomor, Gomorrha, 26, 248.  
 Good fryday, 302.  
 Gorram (Nicolas de Gorran), 380, 528.  
 Gospel, commentaries on, are scarce, 145.  
 Gospel, authority of, 255.  
 Gospelleris, authors of Gospels, 256.  
 Gostli, spiritual, 90; gostly, *adv.* 56.  
 Gouvernaile, governance, 24; government, 118, 239.  
 Graielis, service books, graduals, 194, 515.  
 Gratter, greater, 383.  
 Greek form of absolution, 332, 525.  
 Greese, anoint, 439; greesse, 454.  
 Greesis, steps, stairs, 420.  
 Gregge, aggravate, 319; greggiþ, 286.  
 Gregor þe sixte, 391.  
 Gregory, St., 8, 35, 56, 58, 61, 64, 70, 77, 96, 112, 118, 188, 245, 272, 339, 377, 395, 529.  
 Gregory XI., *vin.*, xiii, xiv, 405.  
 Greke, a member of the Greek Church, 332, 455, 464.  
 Grete, great, 2; greteste, 86.  
 Grette, greeted, 204.  
 Gret chep, very cheap, 185.  
 Greu, Greek, 430.  
 Greue, *sub.* grave, 17.  
 Groos, plain, 408.  
 Grosted (Robert Grossetête, Bishop of Lincoln), 61, 123, 145, 224, 507, 510, 518.  
 Grucchen, to grumble, 111; grucchiþ, 466; grucchyng, 15.  
 Gruccheris, grumblers, 308.  
 Guarnerius, Arnold, viii.  
 þate housis, gate houses (*expenditure on*), 15, 494.  
 þee, yea, 2; þe, 10; þhe, 297.  
 þee, ye, 8.  
 þeer, year, 3; þer, 62.  
 þelden, yield, give, 97; þilding, 423.  
 þerde, a stick, 332.  
 þerdis, yards (*chirche þerdis*), 97, 233.  
 þefe, to give, 181; þeuen, 9; þaf, 3; þaen, 118; þeuyng, 12; þeeuyng, 67; þouen, 40.  
 þette, boast (?), 319.  
 þeuere, giver, 11.  
 þif, if, 2.  
 þifte, gift, 66; þieft, 82; þeftis, 71.



- ȝit, yet, 4; ȝitte, 333, ȝhit, 350.  
 ȝock, yoke, 354; ȝoc, 425; ȝook, 228.  
 ȝonge, young, 6; *comp.* ȝongar, 383.  
 ȝork, York (Archbishop of), 118; play of, 429, 530.  
 ȝouwre, your, 179.  
 ȝouȝe, youth, 253.
- Habitis, dress of monks or friars, 12; its excessive amplitude, 315; sanctity attached to, 316.  
 Hayned, persecuted, spited, 250.  
 I cannot find this word anywhere else, but suppose it to be connected with Fr. *haine*.  
 Hayward, a keeper of inclosures, 444, 532.  
 Halde, hold, 49; haldest, 132.  
 Halewid, those who are sanctified (translates *sanctificatis*, Vulg.), 300.  
 Half, behalf, 303.  
 Halidaies, holy days, 280.  
 Halpeny, halfpenny, 21.  
 Haltyng, lame, 231.  
 Halwen, saints, 88.  
 Halwid, hallowed, 41, 188.  
 Halwyng, consecration, 35, 62.  
 Han, have, *inf.* 15; *ind. pres.* 4; *hauen*, *inf.* 99.  
 Hangiȝ in, depends on, 266.  
 Hard, of hard=hardly, 297.  
 Hardy, bold, 33.  
 Harim, harm, 21.  
 Hasard, gambling, 152.  
 Hauynge, property, 2.  
 Haunten, frequent, 60; hanten, 23; practise, 73, 146, 248.  
 Hauntyng, practice, 207.  
 Hawen, saints, 41, 48.  
 Hawynge, having, 131.  
 Hawking by priests, 23, 151, 212, 246, 259, 434; by monks, 121.  
 Hedly, in a headstrong way, 100; heedly, 256.
- Heele, health, 340; heelp, 297.  
 Heerde, herdsman or shepherd, 321.  
 Hey, high, 5; heiȝe, 13; heȝe, 61; *comp.* heȝere, 159; *sup.* heierst, 327; hierste, 408.  
 Heiȝed, exalted, 225; heyhid, 307.  
 Heieris, heirs, 183.  
 Heyl, hail, welcome, 311.  
 Heynesse, highness, 42.  
 Heldris, parents, 9, 32.  
 Hele, heal, 179; helid, 58; heledde, 343.  
 Hely, Eli, 314.  
 Hely, Elijah, 75; helise, 67; heliȝe, 377; heliye, 380.  
 Helynge, clothing, 97, 387.  
 Helles, else, 125; hellis, 64.  
 Helt, poured, 380.  
 Hem, them, 2.  
 Hende, end, 24; hendeles, endless, 220.  
 Heoris, theirs, 300.  
 Herberwen, v. harbour, entertain, 5; herberewe, 211; herbwre, 210; herbwerid, 129; herboringe, 413.  
 Hereberwe, harbour, shelter, 14; herbwre, 146; herbore, 415.  
 Herberweles, shelterless, 129.  
 Here, their, 2; hern, theirs, 232; heeren, 310; heren, 328; herne, 414.  
 Here, ear, 169.  
 Hereris, hearers, 158.  
 Herefore, therefore, 11; herfore, 13.  
 Heresy, unjustly charged against true priests, 74; prevalent in schools of divinity, 265.  
 Heretics' property, to whom forfeit, 502.  
 Herford (Nicholas), xxvii, xxix, 141.  
 Herid, haired ("ȝe sterre herid or beerdid" = the comet), 308.

- Herie, worship, praise, 216 ;  
   heriede, 301 ; herynge, 206 ;  
   *part.* hirid, 288.  
 Heryngis, praises, 274.  
 Heris, hairs, 21.  
 Herode, 273, 389 ; heroude, 101,  
   297 ; his oath not binding, 389.  
 Herof, for this, on account of this,  
   111.  
 Herre, hinge, 472.  
 Hertis, hearts, 20.  
 Hertly, heartily, 110.  
 Herþe, earth, 86.  
 Heruest trees, trees at fruit time,  
   307.  
 Heest, command, 79 ; hestis, 7 ;  
   "þe ten hestis"=the Ten Com-  
   mandments, 340.  
 Heten, eat, 96.  
 Heuyd, head, 3 ; heued, 218 ; hed,  
   21.  
 Hidliche, secret, 315.  
 Hien, hasten, 168 ; hiȝen, 173 ;  
   hiede, 195.  
 Hye, exalt, 311, 475 ; hiȝen, 241 ;  
   hyed, 421 ; hiȝng, 475.  
 Hiȝt, promised, 348.  
 Hildegar, 11, 492.  
 Hilden, hold ; hilden out=exhibit,  
   171.  
 Hile, *v.* cover, 475.  
 Hilynge, covering, 248, 411 ;  
   church vestments, 223.  
 Hynes, servants, 418, 439, 454.  
 Höfler, Dr. Constantine, ix, xxix,  
   xxxii, xlvii.  
 Holde, fortress, 321.  
 Holde, old, 58.  
 Holde forþ, practise, continue, 3,  
   11.  
 Holderis up, supporters, 10.  
 Huletis, dens, caves, 322.  
 Hole, whole, 67, hool, 100.  
 Holy, wholly, 370 ; hooliche, 42 ;  
 Holy days, breaking of, 9, 120.  
 Holliche, holily, 179.  
 Holid, pierced with holes, 349.  
 Holiness better than knowledge,  
   327.  
 Holouris, whoremongers, adul-  
   terers, 91, 442.  
 Holsum, wholesome, 382 ; *adv.*  
   hoolsumly, 393.  
 Holsumness, wholesomeness, 239.  
 Homly, familiar, 41, 477.  
 Hondis, dogs, 12, 121.  
 Honorie, Honorius III., 40.  
 Hoosis, hose, 287.  
 Hoot, hot, 170.  
 Hope, what it is, 349, 526.  
 Hordam, whoredom, 205 ; hor-  
   dom, 156.  
 Hord, hoarding, fence (?), 316.  
 Hordis, heaps, 100 ; treasures,  
   476.  
 Horden, heap up, treasure, 101,  
   338 ; hoordede, 321.  
 Horses, extravagance in, on the  
   part of the clergy, 60, 88, 92,  
   149, 210, 249, 434.  
 Hospitality of bishops, 413.  
 Host, doctrine of the, 19, 345,  
   349, 352, 357, 465.  
 Host, the worse for consecration,  
   357, 526.  
 Hostiense, the cardynal, the Car-  
   dinal of Ostia, 47, 498.  
 Houȝ, how, 388.  
 Houre, our, 83.  
 Housynge, dwellings, 175.  
 Houslewth, shelter in a house, 211.  
 Howen, ought, 241.  
 Hud, hidden, 299.  
 Hue, Hugh (St.), 382, 512.  
 Hungary claimed by the Popes,  
   xxxiii.  
 Hure, her, 12.  
 Hurlid, banded about, driven,  
   184, 233, 250.  
 Y, I, 76.  
 Iapen, *v.* jest, trick, 82 ; lark, 238 ;  
   iapiȝ, 170 ; iapyng, 213.  
 Iapes, jests, tricks, 12, 65.

- Iame, James (St.), 129, 211;  
 James, 61; Jamus, 304; his  
 teaching on confession, 343.  
 Y-broken, broken, 391.  
 Iche, each, 327.  
 Ychoon, each one, all of them, 328;  
 ychone, 345.  
 Ydiots, ignorant men, 5, 46.  
 Idolatry, it is, to worship an acci-  
 dent, 466.  
 Jacke Upland, 490, 492.  
 Jaudun, John of, xxxiii.  
 Iepte, Jephthah, 389.  
 Ieroboam, an example of simony,  
 67.  
 Ierom, Jerome (St.), 31, 37, 58,  
 112, 118, 122, 125, 248, 380;  
 translated the Bible, 429.  
 Jeromye, Jeremiah, 188, 231;  
 ieromyes, 131.  
 Ierusalem, 125.  
 Ietteris, braggarts. *See* Getteris.  
 Jews, worst governed under  
 priests, 370.  
 Y $\epsilon$ , eye; at i $\epsilon$ =at a glance, 384.  
 Ilche, each, every, 297; 310.  
 Ilke, same, 9, 87, 311.  
 Images, worship paid to, xlii, 7;  
 money wasted on, 210, 279, 521.  
 Ympe, offshoot, 334.  
 Imprisonment for debt, 200, 211,  
 214; for excommunication, 36,  
 74, 95, 277, 496, 505.  
 In, against, 296.  
 Incontinence, prevalence of, 218.  
 Ynde, India, 436.  
 Indignacion, contempt, 4, 204.  
 Induction fees, 248.  
 Indulgences, 8, 82, 150, 238, 464,  
 482, 491, 535.  
 Innocent III., private confession  
 first made binding by, 328, 524.  
 I-now, enough, 327; ynow, 12.  
 Institution fees, 248.  
 Instuyng, instituting, 450.  
 Intention can be judged only by  
 God, 311.  
 Intil, into, 288.  
 Joan (Princess) stops proceedings  
 against Wyclif, xiv.  
 Joas, Joash, 365.  
 Iob, 354; served God on the  
 dunghill, 15; called king, 231.  
 Iogelours, jugglers, 99.  
 Ioly, lively; 169; iolily, gladly,  
 100.  
 Joon, Jon, John (St.) the Evange-  
 list, 9, 34, 37, 195, 327.  
 Joon, John (St.) Baptist, 2, 329,  
 345, 467.  
 John St. Chrysostom, 25, 104,  
 105.  
 Josias, 365.  
 Ypocrisie, hypocrisy, 2.  
 Ypocrite, hypocritical, 89.  
 Yren, iron, 303.  
 Irose, angry, 307.  
 Is, his, 67.  
 Ysaye, Isaiah, 25.  
 Ysedore, 172; ysidre, 272, 374.  
 Israel, 232; israelle, 366.  
 Isscheweden, eschewed, 166.  
 Jubilees, 181, 513.  
 Juda, Christ belonged to the tribe  
 of, 391.  
 Judas, 26, 63, 65, 135, 167, 183,  
 267, 378.  
 Iude, St., 306.  
 Iude, Judæa, 27.  
 Iudycialis, judicial laws, 285.  
 Iuelis, jewels, 63, 86, 195, 216.  
 Iuge, judge, 32.  
 Iurdiccion, jurisdiction, 57.  
 Juries bribed, 63, 183, 513;  
 packed, 182.  
 Jurisdiction, criminal, exercised  
 by ecclesiastics, 385, 528.  
 Jurisdiction of prelates protects  
 vice, 213.  
 Iurrouris, jurors, 63, 183.  
 Instis, jousts, 10.  
 Kacche, catch, 205.  
 Kaste, devise, intend, 87.

- Katerine, Katherine (St.), 205.  
 Kechenes, kitchens, extravagant in monasteries, 15, 494.  
 Kechene clerkis, 13, 65, 168, 242, 246.  
 Keyes, keys, power of, 341.  
 Kepyng, care, 21.  
 Kempt, combed, 426.  
 Keruyng, cutting, 12.  
 Kest, *perf.* cast, kestiden, 443.  
 Keuercheris, kerchiefs, head-dresses, 65, 205; keuerchiefs, 246.  
 Keuerid, covered, 20.  
 Kyn, kind, sort (many kyn skillis=reasons of many sorts), 352; kynne, 160.  
 Kynde nature, 4, 100; race, 7.  
 Kyndely, natural, 174, 372.  
 Kyndles, broods, 2; kyndlyngis, 315.  
 Kynghod, kingship, 471.  
 King's Hall, Cambridge, 508, 528.  
 Kynrede, tribe, 230, 304.  
 Kirtlis, tunics, 40.  
 Knackeris, tricksters, 156.  
 Knackis, tricks, 156.  
 Knackynge, tricky, artificial music, 9, 76, 91, 118, 169.  
 Knighton, xlvi, 254.  
 Knytte, land held by knight service, 384.  
 Knytting, binding, 476.  
 Knoweleche, acknowledge, 256; knowlechþ, 21; knowlechynge, 327.  
 Koynte, cunning, quaint, 347.  
 Kon, can, 320; kunne, 105; koude, 471; koude, 382.  
 Kotis, coats, 287.  
 Kunnen, know, 81.  
 Kunnyng, learned, 5.  
 Kunnyng, knowledge, 10, 23, 58.  
 Label, a tassel, Halliwell. Chaucer uses the word for a pointer attached to the astrolabe. In the text it means a condition under which a bull is granted. The idea seems to be that of a slip attached to the bull and bearing the conditions, 331.  
 Labourers, defrauded and oppressed, 233, 519; robbed by prelates, 73.  
 Lackid, used impersonally (him lackid), 93.  
 Ladies, entertained at monasteries, 129; keep confessors, 334; help on bad priests, 246.  
 Lafully, lawfully, 74.  
 Laity, should read the gospel, 159, 429.  
 Lay rulers, should correct the clergy, 80, 130, 241, 292.  
 Lancaster, Duke of. *See* Gaunt, John of.  
 Languysschynge, sick, 228.  
 Largen, are liberal, 341.  
 Largenesse, liberality, 174.  
 Lasse, less, 31.  
 Laten, late, let, 14, 38.  
 Laudis, a service appointed to be said at 3 A.M. It is usually joined with Mattins, and the two make up the first of the Canonical Hours, 41.  
 Law, Wyclif's knowledge of, iii.  
 Law studied instead of Theology, 157, 511.  
 Lawere, lawyer, 299; lawereris, 23.  
 Lawyers, harm done by, 182, et seqq., 234, 237; ecclesiastical, the worst, 184.  
 Lazar, Lazarus, 344, 526.  
 Lead, gold given for, 23, 66, 245.  
 Leccherours, fornicators, 102; lechouris, 169.  
 Lechery, prelates reserve punishment of, to themselves, 213.  
 Leffel, lawful, 41; leful, 67; leful, 90; leeful, 284; *adv.* lefully, 265; leffly, 132.  
 Lege, liege, 31.

- Leggeaunce, allegiance, 290.  
 Leggen, allege, 289.  
 Leie, tell lies, 264; leiþ, 270; leiþede, 264.  
 Leie, v. lay, 247; leyne, 286; leid, 50.  
 Leyen, *part.* lain, 286.  
 Leyþe, laugh, 460.  
 Leiser, leisure, 112.  
 Lekerous, savoury, tempting to gluttony, 216.  
 Leland, i.  
 Lemes, limbs, members, 323.  
 Lemmanys, concubines, 156; bi-shops have several, 73.  
 Lene, lend, 128.  
 Lengest, longest, 18.  
 Lepers, priest's office in regard to, 343.  
 Lepre, leper, leprosy, 67.  
 Lerid, learned, 243.  
 Lesen, lese, lose, 18, 30; lesynge, 18.  
 Lesewis, pastures, 433.  
 Lesyngis, lies, 3.  
 Lesyng mongeris, liars, 11, 125, 268.  
 Letten, hinder, 3; lettiþ, 48; lettid, 56; letting, 101.  
 Lettede, ceased, refrained, 313; lettynge, ceasing, 190.  
 Lettris of fraternity, 4, 5, 12, 19, 27, 160, 262, 353, 489.  
 Leue! an exclamation equivalent to the modern dear! probably short for "Leue God!" 454 l. 11, 479 l. 5.  
 Leue, gladly, willingly, 333.  
 Leuen, live, 92; leueþ, 183; leuyng, 33.  
 Leuen, leave off, neglect, 53, 70; leueþ, 102.  
 Leuefulliche, lawfully, 297.  
 Leuy (tribe of), 230, 365.  
 Lewid, lay, unlearned, 26, 77, 238.  
 Lewiderste, most ignorant, 409.  
 Lewidly, ignorantly, 289.  
 Lewis of Bavaria, xxxiii.  
 Lichy, like, 414.  
 Lickenesse, likeness, 19, 96; comparison, 319; licnesse, 304.  
 Licned, likened, 97.  
 Liþe, tell lies, 333; liþeþ, 36.  
 Lien on, slander, 120.  
 Lifode, livelihood, 11, 18; lijf-lode, 364; lyfelode, 386.  
 Lige, liege, 16, 62.  
 Ligtly, easily, 481.  
 Liynge, laughing, 213, 517.  
 Likerousnesse, daintiness, 61.  
 Likip (used impersonally), hem likip, 72, 91, 256.  
 Lykyng, pleasing, 14, 162.  
 Likyngis, delights, 34.  
 Lymytacion, restraint, 70.  
 Lymytþ, appoints, gives a monopoly to, 331.  
 Lymytours, friars to whom was assigned a district within which they were the official beggars of the Convent, 5.  
 Lymys, limbs, 109.  
 Lyncolne (Grossetête), 4, 11, 56, 92, 112; lyncolnyense, 385.  
 Lynynge, lending, 277.  
 Liste, *impers.* please, hem liste, 12.  
 Lystris, 298. Teachers or lecturers on Theology in a monastery or capitular church. (I give this with doubt, as the best among the many meanings of "lector." See Mr. Skeat's Note to Piers Plowman, p. 112.)  
 Litergi, lethargy, 372.  
 Litigiousness of prelates, 61, 87, 436.  
 Lytliche, easily, 296.  
 Lyue, leave, 40.  
 Lywynge, living, mode of life, 124.  
 Lok, lock, 330.  
 Loke, look, take care, 38; see 95, 97.

- Londis lawe, common law, 132.  
 Longip, belongs, 69.  
 Lonynge, lending (or begging?), 167; *see* note, p. 512.  
 Loos, loss, 16, 212.  
 Lordeschippinge, exercise of lordship, 385.  
 Lordlynes, lordliness, 384.  
 Lords, duty of, to their subjects, 230, 239; impoverished by endowment, 97, 285, 369; imprisoned for helping true priests, 79.  
 Lordship. *See* Dominion.  
 Lorel, rascal, 191, 212, 214.  
 Lorelschipe, rascality, 156.  
 Lore, doctrine, 350; loris, 38, 303.  
 Losinga, Herbert, 503.  
 Loue, praise, 320, line 4. Cf. Dutch *loven*. I believe the word is not used in this sense in the W. V.  
 Louedaies, courts of arbitration, 172, 234, 242, 243, 512.  
 Louise, loose, let go, 310; lousip, 310; loused, 328.  
 Loute, bow down to, 423, 460; loutid, 306.  
 Lucifer, 2, 3, 15, 24.  
 Luk, St., 146.  
 Lumpis, bodies, societies, 6, 447, 449, 491.  
 Lustly, pleasant, 411.  
 Luther, xx, xlv.  
 Maad, made, 2.  
 Macamethe, Muhomet, 301.  
 Machabees, 468.  
 Magdaleyne, 189, 205.  
 Magnyficat, 169, 512.  
 Magrey, unpleasantness, misfortune, 465.  
 Muhometans, their likeness to the religious orders, 301, 523.  
 Mahound, Muhomet, 99.  
 Maydynhot, maidenhood, 474.  
 Maires, mayors, use their influence on behalf of false preachers, 26.  
 Maistir of stories (Petrus Comestor), 2, 489.  
 Maistris, masters (at the university), 6.  
 Maistry, mastery, lordship, 421.  
 Malachie, 363.  
 Malcus, Malchus, 382.  
 Malencolious, gloomy, ill-tempered, 215.  
 Maliss, power for harm, ill effect, 457.  
 Malle, mallet, 351.  
 Manas, menace, 94, 99; manass, 417.  
 Manas, *v.* threaten, 63, 234; manaside, 461; manasyng, 37.  
 Manere for þe, for fashion's sake, 156.  
 Manhede, manhood, 167.  
 Manly, courteous, 65, 74.  
 Manquelleris, murderers, 10.  
 Manquellyng, homicide, 9.  
 Mansleeris, murderers, 56.  
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 Marchaundise, merchandize, 63.  
 Marchauntis, merchants, 22, 24; machauntis, 172.  
 Margare, Margaret (St.), 205.  
 Marie, the Virgin, 21, 204.  
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 Marteris of glotony, 211.  
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**Mathy**, Matthias, chosen by lot, 452, 482.  
**Maumetrie**, idolatry, 122, 279.  
**Maummetis**, idols, 5, 67.  
**Maundement**, commandment, 7, 149.  
**Measures**, false, 25, 185, 199.  
**Meche**, much, 82, 296.  
**Meddle**, mix, 442; *medlen*, 297; *meddlid*, 456.  
**Medes**, meadows, 10.  
**Mede**, reward, 247.  
**Medeful**, meritorious, 8, 83, 178; *medefulli*, *adv.* 382.  
**Meyne**, household, followers, 32, 81; *meyne*, 102; *meyne*, 365.  
**Meynteneris**, supporters, 24.  
**Meke**, *v.* *humblé*, used reflectively, *meke him* = *humble himself*, 338.  
**Mekerste**, most humble, 460.  
**Mekenesse**, humility, 4.  
**Mendynauntis**, mendicants, 128, 220.  
**Mene**, *sub.* *mean*, midway, 140.  
**Mene**, mediator, 409.  
**Mene**, middle, 271; *menene*, 278.  
**Menely**, moderately, 31.  
**Menours**, minors, 40.  
**Mentile**, mantle, 475.  
**Merchants**, their tricks, 25, 185, 238.  
**Mercymentis**, amercements, 118, 233.  
**Merijt**, merit, 48.  
**Meritorie**, meritorious, 264.  
**Merken**, remark, 387.  
**Meschef**, mischief, 91.  
**Mesel**, leper, 205, 343, 377.  
**Messenger**, messenger, 58.  
**Messis**, masses, 212.  
**Measurably**, moderately, 433.  
**Metenes**, mattins, 22.  
**Meuen**, move, 245.  
**Mychel**, much, 15; *mychil*, 83.  
**Midnight rising of Religious**, 133, 317.  
**Myjtis**, powers, 217.  
**Mylneston of assis**, millstone of a mill worked by an ass, 61, 499.  
**Mynging**, mixing, 475.  
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**Myschef**, misfortune, discomfort, 14; *myschif*, 16; *myscheues*, 49; *myscheyf*, 231.  
**Myschefous**, miserable, 14.  
**Mysese**, discomfort, 380.  
**Myslyuyng**, evil life, 4.  
**Misse-likij**, displeases, 338.  
**Myspeken**, speak ill, 228.  
**Myssaid**, reviled, 353.  
**Missetaken**, taken wrongfully, 344.  
**Myster**, need, 409.  
**Mystiliche**, mystically, 309; *mystely*, 343.  
**Mysty**, mystical, 344.  
**Mytris**, mitres (jewelled), 210.  
**Moche**, much, 3; *mochel*, 83.  
**Moebliis**, moveable goods, 445.  
**Moysses**, Moses, 387.  
**Moldwarpis**, moles, 89, 95, 147, 502.  
**Mone**, money, 331.  
**Mone**, moon, 192, 267.  
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- Moneþ, month, 69.  
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 Monks become such for worldly goods, 61, 122; their many faults, 115, et seqq.  
 Moo, more, 8.  
 Moote hallis, legal assemblies, 395.  
 Moralis, moral laws, 285.  
 Mornynge, mourning, 91.  
 Mornynge abite, garb of penitence, 4.  
 Mortal, what sin is, xxxvi, 338.  
 Mortesid, amortised, 123.  
 Morþere, murder, 11.  
 Morþerid, murdered, 100.  
 Mortuaries, fines due from property on the death of the owner, 224, 518.  
 Morwe, morrow, 204.  
 Moste, greatest, 174.  
 Mot, must, 50; moten, 57.  
 Motetis, a sort of Church music, 90. *See* note, 502.  
 Mount, so called from moving, 457.  
 Mowen, might, 69; mowne, 26.  
 Mowlid, made mouldy, 153.  
 Muk, muck, 5, 147. A favourite expression of Wyclif for riches.  
 Musen, consider, wonder, 35.  
 Mut, must, 285.  
  
 Naaman, 67, 377.  
 Nakid, mere, 35.  
 Name, reputation, distinction, 2.  
 Namely, especially, 9, 20, 279; namelyche, 16.  
 Nappiþ, sleeps, 303.  
 Naprye, table linen, 434.  
 Ne, nor, 3.  
 Neden, compel, 57; nedid, 11, 41.  
 Nedy (should probably be nedys), needs, 49.  
 Nedles, needlessly, 51.  
  
 Neer, nearer, 252, 289, 409.  
 Neet, cattle, 172.  
 Neieþboris, neighbours, 35; neiþeboþeris, 73.  
 Neynþe, ninth, 12.  
 Nemue, *v.* name, nemyn, 465; nempnyd, 394.  
 Nerehonde, almost, 243.  
 Neþeles, nevertheless, 40.  
 Nevill, Lord, impeached, 519.  
 Nycete, trifling, 167, 205.  
 Nicodeme, 2; nychodeme, 256, 297.  
 Nicodemus, gospel of, 256.  
 Nye, nigh, 389.  
 Nyþe, high (the *n* carried on from end of the previous word), 336.  
 Nigromansye, necromancy, 429.  
 Nyle, do not (ne wille used as Lat. *noli*), 21.  
 Nys, is not, 50, 78, 89, 149 (in all these cases used with another negative "nys not").  
 Nyse, dainty, fanciful, trifling, 23, 152.  
 Noble, a gold coin worth six shillings and eightpence, 183, 514.  
 Nobleie, nobleness, 152, 194; nobeleie, 204; noble, 440.  
 Noblemen, keep up bands of ruffians, 243.  
 Noyeþ, hurts, 307.  
 Noyose, hurtful, 315.  
 Noon, None, the fifth of the Canonical hours, 41.  
 Noon, none, not one, 19, 23.  
 Norischen, to nourish, support, encourage, 6, 24; norscheþ, 42.  
 Norisses, nurses, 182.  
 Norwich, bishop of, 152, 502.  
 Not, nought, 216.  
 Not, knows not (ne wit), 333.  
 Notaries, used to take down false witness against preachers, 74.  
 Noteful, needful, 343.



- Nottis, nuts, given as presents by friars, 12.  
 Novelries, novelties, 50; nowelries, 94.  
 Nowarde to hem, they do not care, 24.  
 Nurschid, nourished, 421.  
 O, one 19.  
 Oaths, enforced needlessly, 253.  
 Obedience, civil, xxxvii, 229, 519.  
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 Obesche, obeche, obey, 29; obiche, 90; obliche, probably a mistake for obeiche, 43.  
 Oblischen, bind, 335; oblischid, oblischyng, 298.  
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 Of, by, 78, 89.  
 Of hard, hardly, 297.  
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 Omnis utriusque sexus, The bull, 329, 524.  
 On, one, 21; oone, 50; oon, 293.  
 Onehed, unity, 429.  
 Onest, honourable, 411.  
 Onys, once, 6; oonys, 372.  
 Onoon, anon, 102.  
 Onsuerede, answered, 299.  
 Oonliche, only, 310.  
 Oost, host, 63, 291.  
 Ope, hope, 65, 159.  
 Opyn, public, well known, 287.  
 Opyn, openly, publicly, 34.  
 Or, ere, before, 166.  
 Ora pro nobis, sung in procession through the streets, 133, 176.  
 Orble, horrible, 233.  
 Ordeynen, appoint, 5; ordend, 388.  
 Ordeynyngis, orlinances, 57.  
 Orders, jealousies between, 310, 523.  
 Ordination fees, 166, 393; bribes given to avoid examination, 166.  
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 Orgene, organs, 77; orgen 91; organ, 191.  
 Orible, horrible, 59, 130.  
 Origene, 373, 398.  
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 Ose, Hosea, 383.  
 Oste, host, 345.  
 Osteleris, innkeepers, 181.  
 Ostia, Cardinal of, 47, 498.  
 Oþer, either, 78.  
 Ouer, besides, 460.  
 Ouermost, uppermost, 340.  
 Ournementis, ornaments, 393.  
 Outlawid, driven out, 116.  
 Outtake, except, 54; outakiþ, 130.  
 Outwittis, senses, 291.  
 Owen, own, 3.  
 Owen, ought, 20; owiþ, 11.  
 Oxneford, 427; course of study there, ii; university supports Wyclif, xxvi, et sq.  
 Pagyn, pageant, 206. With the secondary sense of an acted trick, 99. *See* note on p. 515.  
 "In the word pageant the final *t* is unoriginal, as in ancient and tyrant; the derivation is from the Low Latin *pagina*, fully vouched for by the notes in the *Promptorium Parvulorum*, meaning a scaffold for the acting of miracle plays."—From a notice of some remarks made by Prof. Skeat at the Cambridge Philological Society, *Academy*, Dec. 27, 1879.  
 Payed of, satisfied with, 432.  
 Paynymes, pagans, 29, 184.  
 Paleis, palaces, 14, 129; paleicis, 221; paleises, 14.  
 Pans, pence, 36.  
 Panter, snare, 80, 193, 205.  
 Parceyued, perceived, 10.  
 Pardoners, distributors of indulgences, 73, 150, 154, 175, 511.  
 Pardons, indulgences, 5; useless if sold, 66.

- Parischenes, parishioners, 9, 16, 76, 146, 436; pariss (or parish?), 418.  
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 Parsener, partner, 421.  
 Parsones, parish priests, 76.  
 Parte, divide, share, 14; partid, 316.  
 Partynge, distribution, 134, 175.  
 Partyners, sharers, 81.  
 Passen, exceed, surpass, 66, 88.  
 Passyngly, exceedingly, 342.  
 Pastors, what they should be, 438.  
 Pater noster, 16, 176, 320, 421; tract on, 198.  
 Pater noster, the best prayer, 320, 509; taught in English by friars, 429.  
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 Paul withstood Peter, 292.  
 Pecoock, Bishop, 385.  
 Pedderis, pedlars, 12.  
 Pees, peace, 18.  
 Peiere, make worse, injure, 181, 194, 250; peyrynge, 365; peirid, paired, 102; perid, 32; peierid, 188.  
 Payne, pain, penalty, 24, 56; peyny, 339.  
 Peyned, punished, 11.  
 Peyneful, laborious, 124.  
 Peynted, false, hypocritical, 271.  
 Peisible, peaceable, 41.  
 Pellure, fur, 12, 92, 148; pelure, 121; peluris, 127.  
 Penance, false, 25, 160; arbitrary, 333; danger of money penance, 334.  
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 Peny, penny, þe peny, used for money generally, 67.  
 Peny clerkis, account keepers, 78, 246.  
 Pens, pence, 69.  
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 Pere, peer, equal, 47; peris, 183.  
 Peris, pears, 12.  
 Perfit, perfect, 2; perfitere, 269; perfiteste, 157.  
 Perfittly, perfectly, 3.  
 Perilousere, more perilous, 31.  
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 Perpetuald, perpetuated, 477.  
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 Perquisitiuys, perquisites, 393.  
 Perische, pierce, 348; persih, 288.  
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 Pile, rob, 300; piled, 118; piliynge, 88; piling, 417.  
 Pilgromage, 7, 103, 279, 343.  
 Pyned, punished, 213.  
 Pipe wiþ an yuy lefe, 372.  
 Pistles, epistles, 101; pistlis, 157.  
 Pite, pity, 129.  
 Pitee, piety, 228, 304.  
 Placebo, vespers in the office for the dead, 57, 177, 191, 494; placeboes, 15.  
 Placis, mansions, 14. *See* Mr. Skeat's note on Piers Plowman, xiii, 246.  
 Plate, extravagance in, 60, 92, 279, 434.  
 Plede, go to law, 24, 66.  
 Pledynge, litigation, 93, 122; pletynge, 123, 373.  
 Plee, lawsuit, litigation, 60, 61, 116, 123, 146.  
 Pleien, play, 99.  
 Pleies, amusements, 6, 23, 152; pley, mystery play (of York), 429.  
 Pleyneþ, complains, 38, 234; *refl.* plene hem, 388.  
 Pleynt, complaint, 308.  
 Plenerly, fully, 50, 104, 126.  
 Plentifousli, plentifully, 3; plentuously, 68.  
 Plesance, pleasure, 369.  
 Plesandeli, pleasantly, 3; plesaunly, 288.  
 Plesaunt, pleasing, 16.  
 Pluralities sometimes allowable, 432.  
 Poenere, poor, 195.  
 Poynt devyse at, exact, complete, 329.  
 Poyntis, (?) appointments, 250.  
 Poisies, poems (preached), 124.  
 Polychronicon, 391.  
 Pond, pounds, 82; pondis, 100.  
 Ponderen, consider (?), it seems rather to bear the meaning of pretend, 486.  
 Ponysche, 35, 67.  
 Pontificals, books containing prayers and ritual directions for Bishops, especially those needed in exercising the offices reserved to the Episcopal order, 480.  
 Poondis, inclosures, 421.  
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 Poralis, poor people, 14.  
 Porerste, poorest, 460.  
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 Portos, portable breviaries (port-hors); Lat. *portiforium*: "liber quem portat foras sacerdos."—*Int.* to Sarum Breviary.  
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 Postlis, apostles, 55, 462.  
 Potestatis, rulers, 181, 229.  
 Pouert, poverty, 5.  
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- Preire, prayer, 42.
- Preisen, praise, 70; preisyng, 66.
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- Prelates, jurisdiction of, 35, 213, 496, 517.
- Prentis, apprentices, 11, 185, 238.
- Presents given to men of influence, 129, 508.
- Presonen, imprison, 211.
- Presthold, priesthood, 78; prestod, 58, 88.
- Preue, privy, 17, 104; preuei, 5.
- Preuely, secretly, 89.
- Preuyte, secrets, 10; preuytes, 46.
- Prickid, choked with thorns, 443.
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- Priests, poor, institution of, xvi; charged with causing disturbance, 27, 29, 138, 229, 264.
- Prikyng, riding fast, hastening, 24.
- Prime, one of the Canonical Hours due at 6 A.M., 41.
- Principalite, rule, 327.
- Prynte, impress, 473.
- Pris, price, 21, 70.
- Prisone, imprison, 79; prisoned, 79.
- Privileges exempting from residence, 424.
- Priueetes, book of, Apocalypse, 309.
- Priuyng, depriving, 267.
- Processe, continuance, 64; argument, statement, 367.
- Procurasies, procuration fees, sums payable to bishops or archdeacons at visitations, 92, 249, 456.
- Procuratours, proctors, agents, 9, 60, 70, 91, 139; proctours, 279.
- Proff, proof, 70.
- Profitere, more profitable (?) (most likely a mistake of the scribe for *perfitere*), 269.
- Proffen, proffer, 18.
- Propre, property, 40, 478; have in propre = possess as one's own, 461.
- Propre, own, private, 49.
- Proprely, as private property, 49.
- Proprete, ownership, 49.
- Proprid, appropriated, 49, 317, 353.
- Propring, appropriating, 421.
- Prouendris, prebends, 419.
- Proues, proofs, 290.
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     382.  
 At racke and at manger, 435.  
 Fish out of water, 449.  
 Prouncials(mynystrie), officials of  
     the Franciscan order, 40.  
 Pseudo, pretender, hypocrite, 296,  
     308, 479.  
 Pupplische, publish, 290.  
 Purchasen, acquire, 131.  
 Purgatory, 201.  
 Purgatory, Pope ought to empty,  
     81, 501.  
 Pursuen, persecute, 5, 35, 44, 87;  
     pursuynge, 22, 24, 87.  
 Pursueris, persecutors, 138.  
 Pursuyt, persecution, 5, 44.  
 Purtenance, belongings, 370.  
 Purvey, John, 141, 510.  
 Purviance, provision, 387.  
 Putrie, whoredom, 10.  
 Putten on, charge with, slander,  
     19.  
 Queer, choir, 192, 319.  
 Queynte, cunning, 212; queyntely,  
     cunningly, 144, 477.  
 Queyntise, cunning, 20; queyn-  
     tises, tricks, 218.  
 Quekenyd, quickened, made alive,  
     131.  
 Quellyng, killing, 77.  
 Queste, legal inquiry, 182, 278,  
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 Qwestyons, book of (Augustine's),  
     quoted, 362, 375.  
 Quyenals, masses said for the dead  
     during five years, 66.  
 Quik, living, 246; quyke, 96;  
     quic, 477.  
 Quiken, make alive, 319, 452.  
 Quiten, repay, requite, 173, 215.  
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 Ratellen, chatter, 274.  
 Raunge—seyn a more raunge=  
     speak at greater length, 332.  
 Raunsonyd, ransomed, 66.  
 Realte, royalty, high state, 14.  
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 Rebelte, rebellion, 31, 75, 86, 109,  
     229.  
 Recerven, reserve, 98.  
 Rechelesnes, carelessness, 392.  
 Recke, *v.* care, 44, 151; reckijþ,  
     143.  
 Redi, ready, 24.  
 Reeaumus, realms, 305.  
 Refreynen, restrain, 207; re-  
     freyned, 278.  
 Regalie, kingly rights, 130, 279,  
     280, 292.  
 Regnen, reign, 68; regnede, 481.  
 Reisen, raise, 185.  
 Rekennynge, reckoning, 33.  
 Relekia, relics, false, 154.  
 Releue, lift up, raise, 58.  
 Religion, monastic profession, 7.  
 Religious, regular priests, monks,  
     friars, etc., 2.  
 Renewelid, renewed, 314.  
 Rennen, run, 22, 30; renneþ, 100;  
     rennyng, 31.  
 Renneris, runners, 23.  
 Rennue, increase, profit, 320.  
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 Represente, present, 47.  
 Repreuen, reprove, 9; convince,  
     30.  
 Reprof, disgrace, 23.  
 Reproof often a duty, 55, 292,  
     296, 313; should be welcomed,  
     293.  
 Resceyuen, receive, 97; resseyued-  
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- Reste, quiet, 132; leisure, 172.  
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 Reuen, rob, 15, 291.  
 Reuers, plunderers, 243.  
 Reuersip, for resists, 286, 522.  
 Reues, bailiffs, 195.  
 Reule, *v.* rule, 23.  
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 Reward, regard, 21, 36, 96.  
 Rewleliche, regularly, 317.  
 Rewme, realm, 23.  
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- Sib, akin, 437; sibbe, 95.  
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- Weeg, wedge, 49.  
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 Welle, source, 66.  
 Welschap, beauty of figure, 4.  
 Wem, spot, blemish, 304.  
 Wenden, go, 427.  
 Wene, think, 11; wenyng, 423.  
 Where, whether, 84.  
 Werchyng, working, influence, 44.  
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